



Meredith Attwell Baker

February 25, 2020

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Chairman
Senate Commerce Committee
512 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chairman
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Commerce Committee
420 A Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Greg Walden
Ranking Member
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2322 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Wicker and Pallone, and Ranking Members Cantwell and Walden:

As leaders of the House and Senate Commerce Committees, you have powerfully articulated the importance of 5G to America's economic and national security interests. Thank you for your considerable efforts prioritizing policies that help ensure U.S. global leadership in wireless technology.

I ask for your collective leadership to identify and quickly make available mid-band spectrum so the U.S. can continue to be competitive on the global 5G stage. As you know, wireless carriers need a combination of low-, mid-, and high-band spectrum in order to make the 5G economy a reality. In recent years—with clear guidance from your Committees—the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has done a commendable job of auctioning low- and high-band spectrum for commercial licensed use.

To ensure U.S. leadership in 5G, we also need commercial access to additional licensed mid-band spectrum. Mid-band spectrum is unique as it meets both the coverage and capacity needs to carry large quantities of data over wide geographical areas. A recent report compared the United States' spectrum policy to 13 other leading nations and concluded that the U.S. is an "outlier" in failing to make licensed mid-band spectrum available for 5G use. In fact, 30 out of 36 active 5G networks launched globally last year rely on mid-band spectrum.

By the end of 2020, our global rivals will have five times more mid-band spectrum on average than the U.S. The FCC is poised to help dramatically close the gap with the auction of 350 MHz of spectrum this year, and I urge your support of the FCC to keep its schedule. Specifically, the industry is fully supportive of the FCC's recently announced plans to auction 280 MHz of spectrum in the C-band in December, and its commitment to auction another 70 MHz in the CBRS band this summer. It is critical these auctions take place on time.



350 MHz of new mid-band spectrum will be a significant and positive step forward for the U.S. Our national challenge, however, is that other countries continue to push out even more mid-band spectrum. Twenty-four nations have scheduled mid-band auctions this year. South Korea just announced plans to make another 320 MHz of mid-band spectrum available (600 MHz total), Japan plans to auction another 200 MHz (1000 MHz total), and China already has 460 MHz available today.

I ask for your help this year in identifying hundreds more MHz of licensed mid-band spectrum to help drive 5G to more Americans more quickly. There are two clear opportunities already under review that could prove pivotal to America's ability to meet our global rivals' future spectrum resources.

3.1-3.55 GHz. We applaud your efforts to jump start the Administration's investigation of the 3.1-3.55 GHz band as part of the MOBILE NOW Act. We ask that you continue to find ways to bring a substantial amount of that spectrum to market in a timely manner. We can preserve important military operations while providing significant new access to full-power exclusive use 5G operations, which would help us better serve communities outside of urban areas.

6 GHz. Similarly, you have been vocal in your support of expanding next-generation wireless access to the 6 GHz band, while fully protecting important incumbent operations. We urge your support for a balanced approach, making the 6 GHz band available for both licensed and unlicensed use. Recent Wall Street estimates suggest auctioning just half of the 6 GHz band for 5G could raise over \$20 billion. Those proceeds could help meet important congressional priorities from deploying broadband in rural America to upgrading our nation's 9-1-1 systems.

With your continued leadership and decisive action on mid-band spectrum, I am confident the 5G economy will flourish in the United States creating new opportunities to improve and enhance the lives of your constituents and all Americans.

The wireless industry stands ready to partner with you.

Sincerely,

Meredith Attwell Baker
President and CEO
CTIA