



May 11, 2023

Senator Maria Cantwell
Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science, & Transportation
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Chair
U.S. House Committee on Energy and
Commerce
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Ted Cruz
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science, & Transportation
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Energy and
Commerce
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs Cantwell and McMorris Rodgers and Ranking Members Cruz and Pallone:

As non-nationwide wireless carriers that serve rural and regional markets, we urge Congress to swiftly act to reinstate the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) authority to auction spectrum. We also support efforts to work with the FCC and National Telecommunications and Information Administration to create a pipeline of spectrum to advance America’s continued wireless leadership through spectrum policies that support carriers of all sizes.

Smaller wireless carriers provide critical connectivity in rural and underserved communities. In many cases, companies like ours are the only carrier in significant portions of our service areas, providing connectivity not only to our retail subscribers but also to customers of other carriers, including nationwide providers, when they roam into our service areas. We play a key role in ongoing efforts to provide ubiquitous wireless service. American consumers benefit from localized services provided by smaller carriers. We enhance choice and give consumers access to a broader range of options, particularly in less populated and rural areas of the country, as we seek to compete with nationwide providers.

Like all carriers, we depend on auctioned and licensed spectrum to offer the communities we serve the latest wireless innovations and secure and reliable service. An appropriate policy framework, with reasonably-sized geographic licenses and full power levels, will help to promote competition and make strides to connect the underserved. Without increased access to 5G-ready spectrum and spectrum licenses that work for both large and small operators, we jeopardize our country's wireless leadership and the benefits of wireless connectivity in rural, regional, and nationwide markets.

Congress can avoid these outcomes by acting swiftly to reauthorize the FCC's auction authority and advancing spectrum pipeline legislation. America's regional and community-based wireless carriers stand ready to work with Congress and all stakeholders to ensure that all Americans have access to ubiquitous connectivity and the most advanced wireless services.

Sincerely,

ATN International
Carolina West Wireless
Cellcom
C Spire
Docomo Pacific
East Kentucky Network / dba Appalachian Wireless
GCI Communication Corp.
Horry Telephone Cooperative, Inc.
Illinois Valley Cellular
Inland Cellular LLC
MTPCS, LLC d.b.a. Cellular One
Nex-Tech Wireless
Panhandle Telecommunication Systems, Inc.
Pine Belt Wireless
Smith Bagley, Inc.
Southern Linc
Thumb Cellular
Union Wireless
Viaero Wireless
VTel Wireless