

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 6, 2016

Chairman Tom Wheeler
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

We write to urge the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to approve the transfer of Charter's three 700 MHz licenses to T-Mobile and the accompanying request to waive acceleration of the final buildout deadline for these licenses. Unlike Charter, T-Mobile can quickly deploy this spectrum and bring better service and additional competition to rural areas in Montana. The sale of this spectrum and the requested waiver are consistent with Commission precedent and will further our shared goal of increasing access to advanced communications services for rural Americans.

In our home state, the unique geography, low-density population, and extreme weather conditions make it significantly more challenging to provide residents with the communications services most Americans take for granted. Charter incidentally obtained these spectrum licenses when it purchased another cable company, Bresnan Communications. And while the unusual characteristics of our state make deployment especially challenging for a company like Charter that is not a major wireless carrier, T-Mobile is well positioned to deploy this spectrum quickly. T-Mobile enjoys a proven track record building facilities to serve this part of the country and desires to buttress its coverage in these areas.

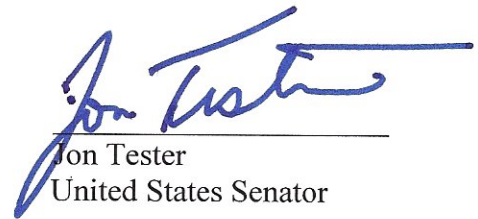
Granting the requested waiver is warranted under Commission rules, and T-Mobile has made significant commitments regarding build-out that will ensure the licenses are quickly put to use. T-Mobile has committed to cover 40 percent of the geographic area covered by the licenses by the later of June 13, 2017 or six months from the time the Commission's approval becomes final, to cover 70 percent of the licensed geographic area by the later of December 13, 2018, or two years from the time the Commission's approval becomes final, and to file an interim progress report. Importantly, if the FCC moves expeditiously on the applications, T-Mobile's commitments may result in the final buildout milestone being completed as much as a year ahead of schedule.

T-Mobile states in its filings to you that, without the requested waiver, it could not meet the accelerated buildout deadlines that would otherwise apply and is therefore unwilling to purchase the licenses from Charter. Importantly, the filing also states that it is unlikely that Charter or, indeed, anyone, would be able to meet the deadline—likely postponing use of this spectrum for years. This would be an unfortunate outcome for the citizens of Montana. We urge you to grant the license transfers and extension as quickly as possible and thereby allow T-Mobile to deploy the spectrum and provide advanced services to rural consumers who need them the most.

Sincerely,



Steve Daines
United States Senator



Jon Tester
United States Senator