

# United States Senate

December 18, 2019

The Honorable Ajit V. Pai  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai:

We write regarding the efforts of the Federal Communications Commission (Commission) to allow for unlicensed use in the 6 GHz band to meet the growing need for unlicensed spectrum for Wi-Fi. As the Commission considers how new users can coexist in the 6 GHz band along with incumbent users, like public safety and public utilities, including those that serve rural areas, the Commission must ensure that incumbent users are protected from harmful interference.

Specifically, as the Commission evaluates a proposal to use Automated Frequency Control to measure and prevent harmful interference, it must be proven effective before it is relied upon. Accordingly, the Commission should condition any rulemaking to permit unlicensed use on a finding of no harmful interference with incumbent users in the 6 GHz band and should articulate meaningful and specific requirements that will prevent harmful interference.

It would not be appropriate to consider relocation of any 6 GHz incumbent users to the 7 GHz band. Moving these incumbent users would be costly, difficult, and impractical. For example, the 6 GHz band provides unique characteristics that meet topographical requirements that are absent in the 7 GHz band. Moreover, it is unclear that there is sufficient additional room in the 7 GHz band. An initial assessment in Hawaii, for example, shows that the band is heavily used by federal agencies and not channelized in a manner that would be conducive to microwave use.

We acknowledge the importance of identifying additional mid-band spectrum for unlicensed use. Wi-Fi currently delivers more than half of all internet traffic and is used to deliver critical services such as connecting patients in rural areas to telehealth services, helping students do their homework, and providing hotspots for affordable connectivity. As the Commission identifies options for allocating additional spectrum for unlicensed uses, such as Wi-Fi, you must prioritize protecting our incumbent users who provide vital services and identify a responsible plan for sharing the 6 GHz band with unlicensed users.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



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BRIAN SCHATZ  
United States Senator