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For Immediate Release



MAP Reacts to 3650-3700 MHz Band Order

Harold Feld, Senior Vice President, Media Access Project, had the following statement in response to the FCC's Order on Wireless Operation in the 3650-3700 MHz Band, OET Docket No. 04-151.

“For more than two years, private interests hoping to capture a valuable portion of the public airwaves and lock competitors out have held up development of this band. Meanwhile, rural Americans who could have enjoyed the benefits of this spectrum have lacked the affordable broadband choices and the benefits of wireless competition.”

“Today's Order essentially reconfirms the approach to this band the FCC adopted in 2004, a set of rules that balances the legitimate concerns of licensees with the power of open spectrum to create new broadband providers and opportunities. It opens 50 MHz of spectrum under a "licensing lite" regime that will allow wireless ISPs (WISPs), municipal broadband systems, and community wireless networks to share spectrum outside the currently overcrowded "junk bands" used by commercial wi-fi systems.”

“While important, today's action is only a small step toward addressing our overall need for policies that make open wireless available to everyone. Hopefully, it signals an willingness by this Commission to move forward on more significant proposals to open more spectrum for non-interfering uses rather than requiring Americans to access the public airwaves through a handful of licensed gatekeepers offering carefully controlled walled gardens under the guise of internet access. While we applaud the FCC for its modest step forward today, the need to make more spectrum open and available for competition remains great. We therefore renew our call to the FCC in the next few months to open the broadcast "white spaces" for unlicensed use and to set aside half the spectrum in the upcoming 700 MHz auction for affordable, wholesale access.”

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