



Press Statement

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MMTC SUPPORTS FCC'S MOVEMENT ON IP TRANSITION, PUBLIC SAFETY, INCENTIVE AUCTIONS AND PROCESS REFORM

WASHINGTON, D.C. (January 30, 2014): Today the Federal Communications Commission, under the leadership of Chairman Tom Wheeler, announced four major initiatives deeply impacting underserved consumers: IP technology transition beta tests, enhanced public safety through text-to-911, DTV spectrum incentive auctions, and FCC process reform. The urgency of achieving universal broadband access, adoption, and proficiency for minorities and underserved communities is a major pillar of each of these initiatives.

MMTC has a long history of engagement with the Commission on these issues, and we commend and strongly support Chairman Wheeler and the Commission for taking these much-needed actions today.

- To protect consumers in underserved communities during the IP transition, the Commission will oversee comprehensive, holistic, transparent, and voluntary beta tests with the cooperation of civil rights and consumer organizations, the business sector, tribal authorities, public safety officials, and state regulators. The Commission's call for comment on diverse technology transitions experiments is a welcome step in the right direction. MMTC's most recent letter to the Chairman on the IP transition is available [here](#).
- MMTC has long supported enhanced emergency alert services and has proposed a plan for multilingual communications in diverse communities (the 2005 "[Katrina Petition](#)"). The aftermath of yesterday's storm in the Atlanta area has shown the importance of communications during natural disasters. Text-to-911 service could mean the difference between life and death for many. Today's announcement regarding the framework for next-generation 911 is a testament to this Commission's commitment to the public interest.
- Expedition in bringing new spectrum to the market will profoundly benefit consumers - particularly people of color, who disproportionately rely on wireless service. We have urged the Commission to [ensure opportunities](#) for minority wireless spectrum ownership through the designated entity program and secondary market transactions. It appears that the DTV incentive auction scheduled for mid-2015 is being designed to promote diversity, competition, and innovation.
- MMTC has given the Commission a [host of recommendations](#) on how to improve FCC processes. Our recommendations, first made in 2009 and refined last month through our New Telecom and Internet Policy Task Force, cover three broad areas of process reform: (a) the speed of FCC decision making and review of rulemaking procedures, (b) improvements to the multi-stakeholder process, and (c) internal and external approaches to diversity and inclusion to advance agency representation and the engagement of minority- and women-owned businesses. We are pleased that the Commission is considering our recommendations, particularly those addressing administrative delays. There is no equal protection when there is no protection, and there is no due process when there is no process.

“In his short time as Chairman, Wheeler has shown a steadfast commitment to addressing the multitude of matters that have languished at the Commission for years,” said MMTC President David Honig. “We’re looking forward to working with the Chairman and the Commission on framing policy that protects consumers, promotes diversity and minority business opportunity, and facilitates universal broadband access, adoption, and informed use - all of which are vital to full participation in the digital economy.”

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About MMTC:

The Minority Media and Telecommunications Council (MMTC) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and preserving equal opportunity and civil rights in the mass media, telecommunications and broadband industries, and closing the digital divide. MMTC is generally recognized as the nation’s leading advocate for minority advancement in communications.