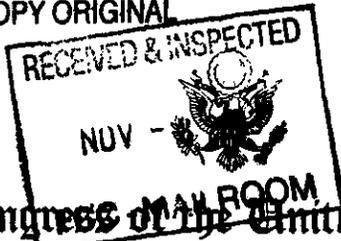


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October 27, 2003

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

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The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to you about an issue of growing importance to the public safety providers and emergency "first responders" in my district. It is becoming increasingly clear that public safety organizations - fire, medical, police and other emergency groups, have insufficient radio spectrum to meet their critical needs.

As you well know, the primary problem is that public safety and commercial radio frequencies are intermingled and adjacent to one another. This haphazard blending of communications networks is leading to dangerous interference that risks the lives of public safety personnel and the citizens they protect. Currently, Ohio is implementing a statewide 800 MHz digital voice communications system that will help the state's first responders provide a more coordinated and effective response to emergencies. Having the necessary amount of spectrum is vital to completing this system.

I understand that the fundamental cause of interference is the close proximity of public safety and commercial wireless operations within the 800 MHz spectrum band. The Federal Communications Commission should consider a comprehensive approach to rebanding that solves the problem on a national basis. Leaders in the public safety community believe that you can achieve this goal by enacting a plan that will provide additional spectrum to public safety -- at no cost to the public safety organizations and local governments that are now struggling with limited resources. With lives on the line, we cannot afford to do anything less.

This is a critical issue for our nation and I urge you to act expeditiously. In this era of increased homeland security, the need to equip our first responders with rapid and reliable communications must be a top priority. This interference to public safety communications needs to be remedied without delay.

Sincerely,

Bob Ney
Member of Congress

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