

January 28, 2004

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: WT 02-55, Public Safety on 800 MHz Band

Dear Madame Secretary,

In this age of increased attention on homeland security and the safety of our communities, it is quite alarming to learn that my fellow law enforcement colleagues are struggling with interference on their mobile radios.

The Rhode Island State Sheriff Department is responsible for all 1,200 square miles of the state – and it is a role that we take quite seriously. I know how difficult it is to keep towns and counties informed and coordinated; and therefore feel qualified to tell you that interference impeding public safety communications cannot be tolerated.

The public safety community, including the National Sheriffs Association, has come out in support of a comprehensive solution to the problem called the Consensus Plan. This advocacy is justified: the plan will proactively eliminate interference by separating public safety frequencies from those of commercial carriers and the plan will be carried out at no cost to public safety agencies, government or taxpayers.

The FCC has been deliberating for far too long. We look to the Commission to see through the inconsequential competitive issues and focus rather on what's best for America's communities. First responders need reliable communications tools and the Consensus Plan provides that while other

proposals accept interference as a fact of life. It doesn't seem difficult to see what's more important.

Please act in the interests of public safety. Don't let another day pass by when critical communications are compromised. Implement the Consensus Plan. The nation will be more secure because of it.

Best Regards,

Chief Gary Dias
Executive High Sheriff
Rhode Island State Sheriff Department

CC:
Congressman James Langevin
Congressman Patrick Kennedy