

MEDA

Missouri Energy Development Association

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January 19, 2004

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Atmos Energy Corporation

Empire District Electric Company

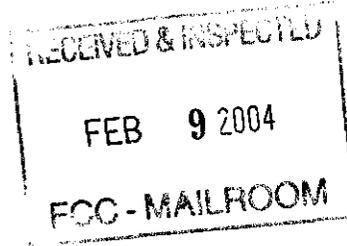
Great Plains Energy (KC Power & Light)

The Inland Group, Inc.

Missouri American Water

Missouri Gas Energy

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554



RE: **In the Matter of Improving Public Safety Communications in the 800 MHz Band; WT Docket No. 02-55 (Ex Parte)**

Dear Secretary Dortch:

The Missouri Energy Development Association (MEDA) is writing to express its opposition to Nextel's so-called "Consensus Plan" and support for the "Balanced Approach Plan". MEDA is the association of the major investor owned electric, gas and water utilities in Missouri. As discussed below, we believe that the Consensus Plan will unnecessarily jeopardize Public Safety communications systems.

We are concerned that the Consensus Plan's relocation process is extremely complicated, and there is no guarantee that Public Safety licensees will be able to continually operate their communications systems during the process. In addition, it is unrealistic to expect all Public Safety licensees to relocate in the time frame required given the complexity of some Public Safety systems and the fact that the rebanding would be going on nation-wide all at the same time.

Furthermore, MEDA is also concerned that the Consensus Plan does not include a sufficient amount of funding to offset all costs associated with its implementation. Significantly, there appears to be questions as to whether the money "committed" by Nextel will even be available in the first place. A partially completed rebanding would be much worse than the limited amount of interference that is occurring today.

Due to the importance of the Public Safety communications and the problems that would be created by the Consensus Plan, we urge the FCC to adopt the Balanced Approach Plan that would resolve interference to Public Safety with significantly less disruption and cost.

Sincerely,

Craig Brown
President
Missouri Energy Development Association

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