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WILLIAM A. MASON
Chief of Police

June 11, 2004

ORIGINAL

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

Reference: WT Docket Number 02-55: 800 MHz Interference

Dear Madame Secretary:

Two of the most important aspects of every emergency operation are efficiency and safety precautions. The Harwich Police Department responds to more than 20,000 calls a year, and all of the officers in the Department understand the absolute necessity for smooth emergency operations that is dependent upon a reliable and dedicated communications system. Time is of the essence when responding to calls, protecting the public, and saving lives and the Department works hard to constantly improve response time and efficiency on our missions.

With a clear understanding of the nature of first responders' jobs and their commitment to saving lives while providing quality services to their communities, we are very concerned that not all first responders can rely on their communications systems. Due to radio interference, dead spots, and lack of compatibility, many police, fire, and EMS workers struggle to communicate with their dispatcher and colleagues on a regular basis. This happens in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as well as states throughout the country and it is needlessly putting lives and property in jeopardy.

Undoubtedly, this is a dangerous problem in need of a solution. The four leading public safety organizations, in conjunction with the private wireless community, recognized this threat and developed a solution. As you know, the Consensus Plan was submitted to the FCC in 2002 as a comprehensive solution that will rid public safety's airwaves of interference. By realigning the 800 Megahertz spectrum, first responders will once again be able to rely on their communications systems.

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The leaders of the public safety community who helped develop the Consensus Plan recognized the need for a fully funded solution. This need has therefore been accounted for and public safety will not have to bear any of the realignment or retuning costs that are incurred during the process. The

Harwich Police Department, Cape Cod, Massachusetts

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Consensus Plan is truly a comprehensive solution, which explains why more than 1,000 public safety departments and officers have joined together to support the Plan. I hope the Commissioners will recognize the remarkable opportunity that is possible with the adoption of the Consensus Plan. Just think -- we will be able to permanently eliminate interference and better serve America's communities. Please join the Harwich Police Department in support of this comprehensive solution.

The Consensus Plan is a vital step in developing a reliable communications system for public safety response services. Your consideration of this matter is most appreciated. If you have any questions or need further information, feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours,



William A. Mason
Chief of Police

CC: Board of Selectmen
Fire Chief Wil Remillard
Lieutenant Tom Gagnon, Administration Division