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From the desk of Rouzbeh



Dr. Rouzbeh Yassini

“Though BCoE continues to believe that broadband connectivity without affordability does not completely address the digital divide we applaud the private investment.”

Hello,

This month we are revisiting the Federal Communication Commission’s process on transferring broadcast spectrum to create a platform for rural broadband. The issue also contains information provided by UNH’s Brian Shepperd regarding a field hearing in New Hampshire focusing on broadband.

TV White Space Auction Update

by *Chris Grobicki*

We last reported on the FCC Incentive Auction (though a little out of date this [PRIMER](#) provides a good refresher from the FCC) back in our April 2017 newsletter and were curious as to how things are progressing. We are particularly interested in spectrum allocated for unlicensed use that could be adopted for rural community fixed wireless broadband.

As you might remember BCoE funded an extensive investigation a few years ago on TVWS and published a well-received [RESEARCH REPORT](#). Recently the FCC released an [ORDER](#) that modifies the Table of Frequency Allocations and four Part 27 rules to bring them in line with the final results of the incentive auction; with spectrum allocated for use by unlicensed white space devices.

Though [MULTIPLE PERMISSIBLE CHANNELS OF OPERATION](#) for white space devices are provided, those most applicable to a community broadband network are the duplex gap (657-663 MHz) and those TV bands unused by licensed services, as defined by the [TV WHITE SPACE DATABASE](#). Because little spectrum’s guaranteed and additional availability varies by location some argue it will continue to be unrealistic to expect attractive economies of scale that enable larger scale deployments.

Microsoft makes the case that a minimum of three channels must be guaranteed, with more in rural areas, to remove the uncertainty that has proven to be a barrier to private investment and have published an excellent [WHITE PAPER](#) that details their rural broadband strategy and recommendations. We will continue to track this initiative and are supportive of this activity.

On the topic of connecting unserved areas of our country to broadband BCoE will be reporting on the status of recent commercial fixed wireless rollouts into these areas by companies like [ATT](#) and [C SPIRE](#) in a future newsletter. Though it is heartening that fixed wireless solutions are now investing in providing broadband connectivity on a large scale into rural areas, we will investigate the affordability, economic viability and performance of these rollouts.

Though BCoE continues to believe that broadband connectivity without affordability does not completely address the digital divide we applaud the private investment.



Hearing on Broadband and New Hampshire

Last month UNH IT's Director of Broadband Services, Brian Shepperd, testified at a US Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation field hearing supporting legislative changes to the pole attachment process, broadband mapping programs, and E-Rate construction project regulations to streamline deployment of broadband infrastructure throughout New Hampshire and the country.

Sponsored by NH Senator Maggie Hassan, the session was titled "Expanding Broadband Infrastructure in the Granite State". It was held at Keene State College.

Here's a link to the [NEWS RELEASE](#) issued by the Honorable Senator Hassan's office.

Rouzbeh