Spectrum Frontiers Auction Update

On November 14, bidding began in the FCC’s spectrum first frontier auction. In Auction 101, the FCC is auctioning licenses in the 27.5-28.35 GHz (28 GHz) band, and in Auction 102 the Commission will auction licenses in the 24.25-24.45 GHz and 24.75-25.25 GHz (24 GHz) bands. As of today, 2,367 county-sized licenses with provisionally winning bids (PWBs) generated over $145 million in Auction 101. Qualified bidders competing in Auctions 101 and 102 include AT&T, T-Mobile, Verizon, Frontier, and U.S. Cellular. Following Auctions 101 and 102 the Commission is planning a 2019 auction of three more millimeter wave (MMW) spectrum bands: 37 GHz; 39 GHz, and 47 GHz.

New Bill Would Require Government Spectrum Valuation

The Government Spectrum Valuation Act, introduced by Senators Mike Lee (R-UT) and Ed Markey (D-MA) on November 14, would mandate annual coordination of the NTIA, OMB, and FCC to determine the value of spectrum allocated to each federal agency. The bill focuses on the effective management of federal spectrum and would require each federal agency to report spectrum value in financial statements, as well as the President’s budget. In his statement on the bill, FCC Commissioner O’Rielly stated, “requiring U.S. Government agencies to put a market price on their spectrum holdings will fix a budgetary anomaly and promote overall spectrum efficiency by incentivizing each agency to release unneeded spectrum.”

FCC Extends Reply Comment Deadline for C-Band Proceeding

The Commission granted an extension request filed by the Dynamic Spectrum Alliance, the American Cable Association, the Competitive Carriers Association, the Public Interest Spectrum Coalition, and the Wireless Internet Service Providers Association. The request sought additional time to file Reply Comments in response to the FCC’s C-Band rulemaking proceeding. Earlier this year the Commission sought comment on the feasibility of allowing commercial wireless services to use or share use of the C-Band (3.7-4.2 GHz).

December Commission Open Meeting

A tentative agenda has been released for the FCC’s next Open Meeting scheduled for December 12. Among other items, the Commission will consider a Report and Order that would adopt rule changes for the 37 GHz, 39 GHz, and 47 GHz bands and provide an incentive auction mechanism to offer contiguous blocks of spectrum in the upper 37 GHz and 39 GHz bands. In addition, the Commission will consider a Report and Order, Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and Order on Reconsideration proposing additional funding for rate of return local exchange carriers if they increase fixed broadband speeds to 25/3 Mbps—the current fixed broadband