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DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

SEMINOLE COUNTY
FLORIDA'S NATURAL CHOICE

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Federal Communication Commission
Bureau / Office

Chairman Kevin J. Martin
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Obstacles to Delivery of Next-Generation Satellite Communications Services
(File Nos. SES-LFS-20050826-01175; SES-MFS-20051122-01614; SES-STA-20060307-00374; SES-STA-20060310-00419; SES-LFS-20050930-01352; SES-MFS-20060118-00050; SES-STA-20060308-00388; SES-STA-20060313-00430; SES-LFS-20051011-01396; SES-STA-20060314-00438; SES-MFS-20051207-01709; SES-STA-20060307-00372; SES-LFS-20051123-01634; SES-STA-20060316-00454; SES-MFS-20051202-01665; SES-STA-20060307-00373; SES-LFS-20060303-00343; SES-STA-20060315-00445)

Dear Chairman Martin:

Living in Florida means facing natural disasters on a frequent basis, including hurricanes every year, and now, large wildfires in a portion of our state. In many of these situations, our communications technologies become useless due to power outages and overwhelming demand. Fortunately, we have come to rely on satellite communications during these situations, which has enabled us to continue to operate vital communications networks for our first responders and government officials. Satellite providers provide reliable voice and data communications to key state agencies, which has enabled us to being relief to citizens quickly and even save many lives.

Since communications are such a large part of any effective disaster response plan, we are always very interested in new technologies that can improve our ability to coordinate our medical and fire rescue personnel. One satellite provider has announced that it is developing a new satellite system that has the ability to both ensure effective emergency communications, while also making mobile broadband service available everywhere, even in rural areas. This new system is also hybrid – that is, it will enable our emergency personnel to quickly and easily switch from standard communications platforms to satellite service when a disaster strikes.

Unfortunately, this new technology has two roadblocks in its path to implementation. It is our understanding that Inmarsat has yet to return a loan of some L band spectrum, and the five parties that currently control the L band spectrum in North America have had the L band spectrum inefficiently distributed between them. Providers need contiguous spectrum space to offer the types of next-generation technologies that they are currently developing.

If the FCC were to redistribute the L band spectrum in a more contiguous fashion and require that leased spectrum be returned, it would enable providers to deploy new two-way satellite communications tools. Please consider this issue and move quickly to clear the path for this and

other technological innovations. By doing so, you'll be helping some of the hardest-working people in our communities: the first responders that save our lives when disaster strikes.

Very truly yours,

Gregory A. Holcomb
Seminole County, FL
Information Technologies Manager