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NPSTC Endorses Proposal to Provide Additional Channels in 700 MHz for Public Safety; Urges FCC To Reject Verizon's Objection

(Littleton, Colorado, February 26, 2007)—The National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC) urged the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to adopt the proposal of 700 MHz guard band licenses that would add 3 MHz of spectrum to the public safety segment, reconfigure its narrowband voice channels, and revise certain technical rules applicable to guard band licensees.¹ In a letter to the FCC, NPSTC stated it was convinced that the proposal will make a tangible difference toward enhancing broadband capability.

In a separate letter, NPSTC urged the FCC to reject Verizon Wireless' analysis claiming that the proposal would cause interference to commercial and public safety operations in the 700 MHz band. NPSTC stated that its review of the detailed technical record underlying the proposal indicated that the spectrum could be used effectively by public safety and that public safety and commercial services will coexist

NPSTC noted that its work in the 700 MHz band has focused on providing local agencies the flexibility to access broadband, narrowband, and wideband services. When the 700 MHz public safety allocation and service rules were promulgated, broadband was not an alternative. Since then, broadband has emerged as an important service yet what continues to resonate in the public safety sector is affording local officials, who must pay for radio systems, the discretion to choose what meets their needs best. The additional 3 MHz of spectrum to public safety communications encompassed by the guard band licensee proposal would be a meaningful contribution and improve emergency response operations. NPSTC urged the Commission to integrate the proposal into its imminent decisions addressing the 700 MHz commercial and public safety segments to ensure that the benefits to public safety will not be lost.

NPSTC is a federation of organizations whose mission is to improve public safety communications and interoperability through collaborative leadership.

¹ WT Docket No. 06-169, WT Docket No. 96-86, WT Docket 06-150, and PS Docket 06-229.