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October 27, 2008

Kevin J. Martin  
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Martin:

Over the past four and a half years, the Federal Communications Commission has undertaken an exhaustive look at opening up the vacant TV "white spaces" spectrum for unlicensed use. Now-- after the FCC's Office of Engineering Technology has conducted eight months of unprecedented lab and field testing, and after the Commission has received and reviewed nearly 30,000 separate comments-- the time is ripe for the Commission to act.

Your leadership in this area has been outstanding, and Google appreciates your pledge of support for opening the white spaces spectrum. Now I respectfully ask you and your fellow Commissioners to move forward at your November 4th meeting with rules that will help bring high-speed broadband access to more Americans. Just as Wi-Fi sparked a revolution in the way we connect to the Web, freeing white spaces for unlicensed mobile use will help unleash an entirely new wave of technological innovation, creating jobs, and boosting our economy. Still, it can happen only if the FCC adopts rules that make the best possible use of this fallow spectrum.

This moment has been a long time in the making. Two weeks ago, the Commission's engineers announced that white spaces devices could operate safely and without interfering with TV broadcasts or wireless microphone signals. From years of intense study, the Commission's professional staff has rendered its best work. The resulting draft order carefully and appropriately addresses all legitimate concerns about potential interference with incumbent users. These rules are, if anything, overly conservative; nonetheless, the proposed framework appears to be sound, and I strongly support its swift adoption.

Unfortunately, groups that have long opposed opening up the white spaces are now employing stalling tactics to derail the technology -- before the FCC can write rules for this spectrum. I urge you and your fellow commissioners to ignore these baseless entreaties. All parties have had ample opportunity to participate in this lengthy process, from beginning to end. The enormous promise of white spaces is simply too great to entertain last minute politics as usual.

We are eight days away from a vote that could transform the way we connect to the Internet. Your vote will spark technological innovation in the US directly and globally. The time for study and talk is over. The time for action has arrived.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Schmidt".

Eric Schmidt  
Chairman of the Board and CEO  
Google, Inc.