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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510–1904

September 21, 2007

The Honorable Kevin J. Martin
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, SW
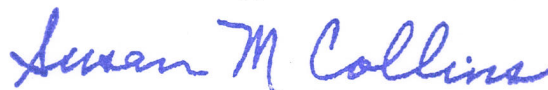Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Martin:

I am writing concerning reports that the Commission may authorize the use of unlicensed wireless devices in the "white spaces" in the broadcast television spectrum. I urge the Commission not to take such a step until such devices have been thoroughly tested to ensure that they do not pose a risk of interference with over-the-air broadcast signals.

Proponents of the use of white spaces see it as a means of delivering very high-speed Internet access to rural areas. I understand and enthusiastically support that goal, and I strongly believe that high speed Internet access is essential to economic development throughout rural America. Nowhere is this more true than in Maine, which has a dispersed rural population that is difficult and expensive to serve. Wireless broadband may present the best hope yet for overcoming the economic obstacles to serving these rural areas.

At the same time, we must remain focused on the success of the upcoming transition to digital broadcasting. Many Americans remain unaware of this transition, and are unprepared for it. Recent surveys show that more than 21 million American households – 87,000 in Maine – rely on over-the-air signals to receive broadcast television. It is important that as we get closer to February 17, 2009, there be no confusion over whether digital televisions and converter boxes will work. Testing unlicensed wireless devices to make sure they do not interfere with over-the-air broadcast signals is therefore essential.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Susan M Collins

Susan M. Collins
United States Senator

SMC:ml