



June 24, 2019

The Honorable Eliot L. Engel
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Engel:

We write on behalf of the nation's mayors and city council members to register our strong support for the Don't Break Up the T-Band Act of 2019 (H.R. 451) and to thank you and your original co-sponsors – Representatives Lee Zeldin, Al Green, and Pete King – for introducing this important bipartisan legislation.

As you are well aware, Section 6301 in Title VI of P.L. 112-96 mandates the Federal Communications Commission to begin an auction of the T-Band spectrum allocated to public safety by February 21, 2021 and clear public safety users from the band within two years of the auction's close. This provision negatively affects 11 major metropolitan areas: Boston, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Dallas, Pittsburgh, Houston, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Miami and Washington, D.C. These areas have a combined population of nearly 90 million people, more than one-fourth of the total U.S. population. Auctioning off the T-Band could leave these jurisdictions without other spectrum for life-saving operations.

Indeed, a report released by the General Accounting Office just three days ago found that in three of the four metropolitan areas it examined, officials said they haven't found a T-Band alternative, noted that a recent FCC study also found few options, and recommended that Congress consider allowing public safety organizations to keep using the T-Band.

Local public safety organizations in these areas have spent many years and millions of federal, state, and local dollars to plan and build out T-Band networks to meet mission-critical voice requirements resulting in hardened public safety networks that meet their operational needs. These T-Band networks provide resilient mission-critical voice coverage; communications reliability; group calling; emergency call alerting, local control and specialized operations capability; and regional interoperability.

H.R. 451 will resolve an important issue for local public safety organizations across the nation. By repealing the T-Band auction requirement, Congress ensures that local fire, EMS, and law enforcement agencies will continue to be able to communicate with one another during emergency operations and major incidents. We urge Congress to pass this important bipartisan legislation this year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Cochran".

Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director
The United States Conference of Mayors

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clarence Anthony".

Clarence Anthony
CEO and Executive Director
National League of Cities