

For Immediate Release
Contact: Francella Ochillo
info@nextcenturycities.org
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NEXT CENTURY CITIES APPLAUDS THE FCC'S EFFORTS TO INCREASE SPECTRUM AVAILABLE FOR WI-FI

Washington, D.C. (April 1, 2020) – Today the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) circulated draft rules permitting unlicensed devices to operate in the 6 GHz band. The proposal would allow unlicensed devices to share the band with incumbent licensed services, making 1,200 megahertz of spectrum available for unlicensed use.

Spectrum is a public resource that fuels wireless connectivity. The airwaves are allocated by the FCC to support mobile, satellite, broadcasting, Wi-Fi, and Bluetooth networks -- among other purposes. Wi-Fi networks, in particular, are essential in areas that do not have access to cable or fiber wireline.

Francella Ochillo, Executive Director, said:

“The nationwide coronavirus shut-in has exposed the urgent need to connect every community, especially those in hard to reach areas. Cities, towns, and counties that are still waiting for fixed broadband connections could immediately benefit from wireless solutions that ultimately depend on access to spectrum. We applaud the FCC’s efforts to expand which populations benefit from this underutilized resource.”

Ryan Johnston, Policy Counsel, said:

“Chairman Pai’s proposal would help support connectivity nationwide during this national emergency. As more people are asked to work, learn and live from home, this spectrum allocation could decrease congestion on wireless networks and complement wireline connections. It would also provide immediate options for unserved and underserved communities to get online.”

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Next Century Cities is a non-profit membership organization of over 200 communities, founded to support communities and their elected leaders, including mayors and other officials, as they seek to ensure that all have access to fast, affordable, and reliable internet access. Next Century Cities celebrates broadband successes in communities, demonstrates their value, and helps other cities to realize the full power of truly high-speed, affordable, and accessible broadband. For more information, visit www.nextcenturycities.org.