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WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Standstill: Industry Uncertainty After FCC Auction Authority Expiration

Representatives at a **House Communications** Subcommittee hearing Friday didn't pull punches when talking about the Senate allowing the **FCC's** spectrum auction authority to expire.

"I must say, I'm often a critic of the Senate, so I was not surprised the Senate did not pass the House's bipartisan bill. They have a basic problem passing any legislation, in case any of you didn't know that," Rep. *Frank Pallone* (D-NJ) quipped. "But we cannot give up and our work continues."

The hearing was, fittingly, on the future of America's spectrum and strategies to position it to remain the leader in wireless technology globally. Panelists said there are a lot of unanswerable questions now about what the FCC can and can't do, including whether it is allowed to continue processing auctions that have already taken place to ensure winners receive the rights to spectrum licenses they've already paid for. To date, the FCC has held 100 auctions and raised more than \$233 billion in revenues.

"There's a lot of uncertainty in the industry. There's a lot of uncertainty at the FCC as to what the FCC can and can't do right now," **CTIA** EVP *Brad Gillen* said. "This has been a critical tool in how they operate, it provides 25% of the funding for the agency, so the sooner we get the certainty back, we start moving forward."

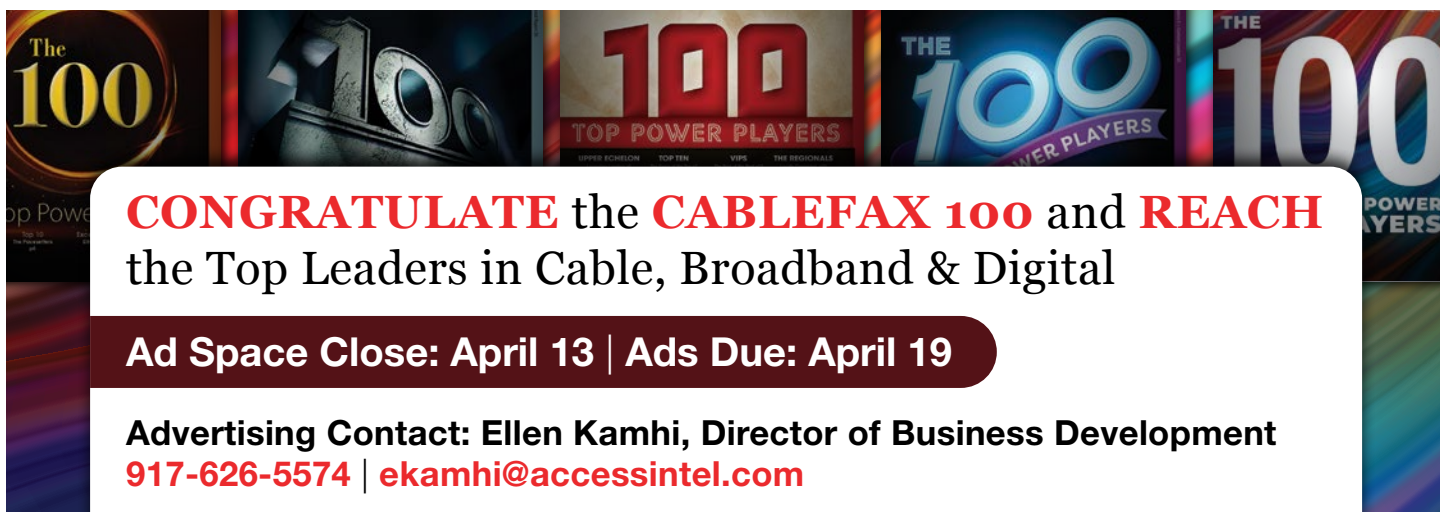
Uncertainty does not drive capital, Gillen went on to say. Supporters of the FCC auctions have said in the past that it

is critical that a renewal comes with a meaningful spectrum strategy and schedule that allows those in the private sector to plan their R&D cycles and other investments around when additional spectrum licenses will be released.

"The demand for data just continues to grow and grow, and we need all available technologies to be able to provide the type of seamless connectivity from providers all the way down not just to the household, but to the device and consumers and we have a great opportunity to do that," **NCTA** EVP *James Assey* said. "But we need to be able to work on a balanced strategy that will unlock new spectrum for commercial use."

While everyone can agree that more of all spectrum is better, it is a finite resource and there's no changing that. Research studies are underway to examine whether agencies like the **Department of Defense** are fully utilizing their spectrum resources or if some licenses could be shared for commercial use. Assey believes shared spectrum regimes are the only way that commercial needs can be met while respecting the demands of government users. But former FCC CTO *Monisha Ghosh* said shared spectrum regimes come with a number of challenges that need to be considered before everyone moves full-speed ahead.

"You're trying to share between legacy systems which are sometimes decades old with very new systems that are much more agile, can share better and we always have to be backwards compatible," she said. "So having funds that allow some of those legacy systems to upgrade or relocate or



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even share better... I think we should explore all possibilities of doing this.”

Much of the conversation stayed on spectrum talk, but the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program earned quite a few mentions as well. The program is likely to run out of funding early next year, and panelists and committee members alike talked about the positive impacts of the program in connecting more low-income and Tribal households.

Enrollment efforts carry on. FCC Chair *Jessica Rosenworcel* shared a Report and Order with the other FCC commissioners Friday that proposes a second, more targeted Notice of Funding Opportunity aimed at raising awareness and promoting ACP. It's another attempt to get community institutions and organizations to team up with the agency and receive funding in exchange for spreading the word about the subsidy program.

Additionally, the FCC is making an additional \$66 million available through its existing Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program. After reviewing 350 applications with proposals from partner organizations looking to serve as community messengers for the ACP, the Commission has chosen 197 applicants from all 50 states and territories for a broad array of outreach projects. Those include the conducting of digital campaigns, door-to-door canvassing, the operation of phone banks and the hosting of enrollment events.

T-MOBILE RENEWS SIEVERT'S CONTRACT THROUGH 2028

T-Mobile is standing by CEO *Mike Sievert*, entering into an amended employment agreement that will continue through April 1, 2028. According to an [8-K](#), Sievert will receive a base salary this year of \$1.75 million as well as annual long-term incentive awards with a target grant-date value of no less than \$18.5 million. Some 50% of that value will come in the form of performance-based restricted stock units while the remaining 50% will be made up of time-based restricted stock units. Additionally, on April 1, he'll be given a one-time award of performance-based restricted stock units “with respect to a target number of shares of T-Mobile common stock equal to the quotient of \$10,000,000 divided by the average closing price of T-Mobile common stock over the thirty calendar day period ending five days before the grant date.”

RISE OF VMVPDS IMPACTING AFFILIATE DEALS

The tide could be turning between TV station affiliates and vMVPDs when it comes time to renew distribution agreements,

according to **SVB MoffettNathanson**. In previous years, networks and digital distributors made agreements that included retrans rates for affiliate boards. However, as seen with **fuboTV** losing [certain](#) **CBS** affiliates and **Sinclair's ABC** stations going dark on **Hulu + Live TV**, that notion could change, with CBS' parent company **Paramount** offering a potential solution. “The CBS affiliate board decided not to endorse the offer Paramount presented as part of its broader negotiations with fuboTV for the company's owned and operated CBS TV stations and portfolio of legacy Viacom cable networks,” the firm said in a note. “In turn, Paramount reached a new deal to provide FuboTV subscribers a national network content feed with access to its sports (including NFL) and general entertainment programming in local markets.” For **Disney**, it has a master agreement that affiliates can opt into, but affiliates can also negotiate independently with vMVPDs. But what CBS is offering could end up laying out the blueprint for future deals. “If national network feeds have the ability to fulfill the NFL local game requirements, it would seem as though the broadcast networks should be able to obtain improved economics from its new vMVPD deals,” the firm said.

NBCU STRIKES PROGRAMMATIC PARTNERSHIP

NBCUniversal is enhancing the addressability of its programmatic ad inventory on **Peacock** by integrating Unified ID 2.0. The company is partnering with the programmatic marketing technology company **The Trade Desk** to scale identity across the streaming service, applying UID2 on all devices and consumer touchpoints. Other companies that have implemented UID2 include **Disney**, **Paramount** and **FuboTV**.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises is rolling out its “Change the Game” campaign dedicated toward Latino women that will have activations on broadcast and digital channels alongside community events across the U.S. Some events include a panel at **Telemundo's** HQ featuring women and executives in sports, a web series dedicated to spotlighting the impact of women in sports and dedicated segments on “Zona Mixta” on topics impacting women in sports. The campaign will lead up to the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, which will air on Telemundo and **Peacock** this summer. – **Spectrum** will have an on-demand curation of movies and documentaries that are dedicated to women trailblazers from March 7-21. Spectrum TV customers can access the collection under the “Fierce and Fabulous” category, where they'll see films such as “Ghost-

busters,” “Miss Bala” and “Mr. & Mrs. Smith.” From March 7-13 the platform will have a “Women in History” category with “I Am Woman,” “Battle of the Sexes” and others. – **MSG Networks** will have special programming throughout March dedicated to stories, contributions and the impact women have made on sports and culture in New York. It’ll have short-form content highlighting women such as *Simone Biles* and *Becky Hammon*, exclusive access to NY’s professional women’s hockey team and coverage of “Unleashed NYC,” a two-day event dedicated to the wellbeing of women that begins March 24.

PROGRAMMING

Fox News will have a documentary “Sacrifice and Survival: A Story from the Front Line” premiere on the network March 19 at 9pm. The program details FNC correspondent *Benjamin Hall’s* journey following an attack that left him severely injured while covering the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Hall also has a memoir “Saved: A War Reporter’s Mission to Make it Home” that’ll be released on Tuesday. – The **NFL’s** first Black Friday game will be available to stream for free on **Prime Video** without the need for a subscription. The game will take place Nov. 24 and is expected to kick off at 3pm, with the matchup still to be announced.

PEOPLE

Univision is elevating *Veronika Moroian* to President/GM of Univision Los Angeles, after serving in the same role for the company’s stations in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. since Nov. 2021. Her new position will have her manage the sales, news, community affairs, operations technology, marketing and promotions departments in the LA region. Moroian has been with Univision for nearly 20 years, first starting in affiliate relations. – *Dan Jedda* is headed to **Roku**, joining as CFO effective May 1. He’ll succeed *Steve Loudon*, who’s set to depart the company in Aug. following a transition period. Jedda joins after being CFO of *Stitch Fix*, and his new position will have him oversee global corporate finance, investor relations, financial planning and reporting, accounting, tax, treasury and internal audit.

CABLEFAX DASHBOARD

Twitter Hits

Lt. Governor Mike Kehoe @LTGovMikeKehoe

Patricia Jo Boyers, a 2023 Women of Achievement Award recipient, is a [TheCableCenter](#) Cable Hall of Fame inductee, president, CEO, & co-founder of [BOYCOM](#) Cablevision, and serving her third year as [ACACONnects](#) chairman. Check out [@BoyersPatty’s](#) bio here: t.gov.mo.gov/women-of-achie...



2023 Lieutenant Governor's Women of Achievement Award
Patricia Jo Boyers
POPLAR BLUFF

Christopher Terry @ChristopherTerr

A [@FCC](#) spectrum auction reality show would be fun....don't knock it...one part [@cspan](#) Communicators, one part Survivor and one part those shows where people bid on abandoned storage units.

Ratings gold.

Joe Kane @thejokane - Mar 9

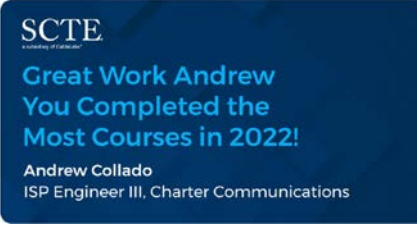
With auction authority set to turn into a pumpkin at midnight, we're presumably back to assigning spectrum rights via comparative hearings/beauty contests.

May I suggest the [@FCC](#) declare the dispositive factor in that contest is "how much money will you pay?" twitter.com/JLPhillipsDC/s...

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Congratulations to Andrew Collado, from Charter Communications, for completing the most courses at SCTE in 2022! You're a rockstar, way to go. 🎉 [@CharterNewsroom](#) [@GetSpectrum](#)



Great Work Andrew You Completed the Most Courses in 2022!
Andrew Collado
ISP Engineer III, Charter Communications

Research

(Source: [EY's Annual Evolution of M&E Report](#))

- > 47% of M&E executives believe they must reinvent their business model to meet the challenges and opportunities of the market today.
- > They're focused on improving the customer experience, but 40% of surveyed executives say they do not fully understand their customers today.
- > 75% believe customer satisfaction should be and is top of mind when considering possible M&A activity. Additionally, 50% of the respondents believe partnership formation is necessary to realize long-term goals.

Up Ahead

- MARCH 13-16:** [Satellite 2023](#); DC
- MARCH 28:** [Free State Foundation's Annual Policy Conference](#); DC
- APRIL 15-19:** [NAB Show](#); Las Vegas
- APRIL 19-20:** [Telecommunications Industry Association's BEAD Success Summit](#); Arlington
- APRIL 26-27:** [Pennsylvania Broadband Summit](#); Lancaster

Quotable

“Obviously, we’re a converged carrier. We’re somewhat of a unique competitor to cable and vice versa, I think... We’ve been competing with cable. And I can tell you that they are enjoying some success and the heightened competitiveness that you see play out in the market, it exists. What we see in our business is any trend that gives us pause or concern about that, the share take or the share change isn’t a material number for us. And having said that, for us, we look at having owner’s economics in both the fiber and wireless business, and we get to enjoy those economics as we go to go grow the business... And certainly, cable at some point is going to have to tackle the cost of continuing to service a growing wireless customer base and the handset evolution and the cycling of that. So I think they’ve got potentially some margin questions coming.”

– **AT&T COO Jeff McElfresh** at the **Morgan Stanley TMT Conference on Cable’s growing share of the wireless market**