



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

March 15, 2016

Motion 14587

Proposed No. 2016-0123.3

Sponsors Upthegrove

1 A MOTION requesting that the executive develop and
2 transmit a report that reviews the potential impacts of the
3 upcoming auction of federally licensed broadcasting
4 frequencies on King County taxpayers, residents and
5 businesses.

6 WHEREAS, increasing demand for access to wireless connectivity poses a major
7 challenge to ensure that America's wireless networks have the capacity to support the
8 critical economic, public safety, health care and other activities that rely on them, and

9 WHEREAS, the radio spectrum is the range of frequencies used for wireless
10 applications including broadcast television and radio, cell phones, satellite radio and
11 television, wireless computer networks, Bluetooth, GPS and police dispatch, and

12 WHEREAS, in the United States, the National Telecommunications and
13 Information Administration governs federal government users of the radio spectrum and
14 the Federal Communications Commission ("the FCC") regulates all other users, and

15 WHEREAS, starting on March 29, 2016, the FCC will hold an auction, known as
16 "the Incentive Auction," as a means of repurposing the radio spectrum by encouraging
17 existing licensees to voluntarily relinquish spectrum usage rights in exchange for a share
18 of the proceeds from an auction of new licenses to use the repurposed spectrum, and

19 WHEREAS, television stations operate under license from the federal government
20 and are required to broadcast "in the public interest," and

21 WHEREAS, local television news serves the public interest by providing real
22 time information in times of crisis, such as earthquake, wildfire, extreme weather and
23 civil unrest, and

24 WHEREAS, concerns have been raised that purchasers appear to have acquired
25 broadcast licenses following Congressional authorization of a spectrum auction to
26 position themselves for windfall profits from the resale of broadcast licenses rather than
27 from provision of public interest broadcasting, and

28 WHEREAS, concerns have been raised that the potential closure of hundreds of
29 local television stations as a result of the Incentive Auction is not in the public interest;
30 and

31 WHEREAS, the FCC should facilitate the reallocation of the television bandwidth
32 to allow the more efficient use of a publicly owned resource, and

33 WHEREAS, reallocation of the broadcast spectrum should maintain benefits to
34 taxpayers than to market speculators, and

35 WHEREAS, proceeds from the Incentive Auction should be reinvested in the
36 public interest;

37 NOW THEREFORE BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

38 A. The executive shall develop and transmit to the council a report that reviews
39 the potential impacts of the upcoming Incentive Auction on King County taxpayers,
40 residents and businesses. At a minimum, the report shall include:

- 41 1. Analysis of the impact of the Incentive Auction on county residents,
42 including the availability of public interest broadcasting;
- 43 2. Analysis by the office of emergency management of the disaster
44 coordination-related risks and impacts of the potential loss of spectrum for local
45 television;
- 46 3. Analysis of the fiscal impact of the Incentive Auction on county government
47 and residents;
- 48 4. A potential strategy to ensure equitable distribution of benefits from the
49 proceeds of the Incentive Auction; and
- 50 5. Recommended language for inclusion in the federal legislative agenda.
- 51 B. The executive shall transmit the report required in subsection A. of this motion
52 by March 25, 2016, in the form of a paper original and an electronic copy with the clerk
53 of the council, who shall retain the original and provide an electronic copy to all

54 councilmembers, the council chief of staff, the policy staff director and the lead staff for
55 the government accountability and oversight committee, or its successor.

56

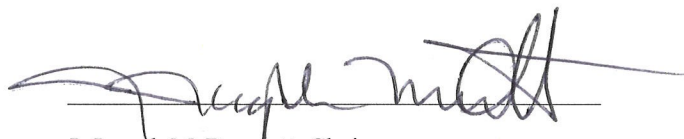
Motion 14587 was introduced on 2/22/2016 and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 3/14/2016, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Dunn,
Mr. McDermott, Mr. Dembowski, Mr. Upthegrove, Ms. Kohl-Welles
and Ms. Balducci

No: 0

Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



J. Joseph McDermott, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: None