



November 12, 2010

The Honorable P. Michele Ellison, Bureau Chief  
Enforcement Bureau  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Ms. Ellison:

MAPPS ([www.mapps.org](http://www.mapps.org)) is the only national association exclusively comprised of private sector firms in the remote sensing, spatial data and geographic information systems field in the United States. Current MAPPS memberships span the entire spectrum of the geospatial community, including Member Firms engaged in satellite and airborne remote sensing, surveying, photogrammetry, aerial photography, LIDAR, hydrography, bathymetry, charting, aerial and satellite image processing, GPS, and GIS data collection and conversion services. MAPPS also includes Associate Member Firms, which are companies that provide hardware, software, products and services to the geospatial profession in the United States and other firms from around the world.

According to an Associated Press article dated November 10, 2010, the FCC is investigating Google's activities including photographing neighborhoods for its "Street View" mapping feature.

MAPPS respectfully urges the FCC to use extreme caution and not implement any enforcement or broad regulation that would have a harmful affect on the broad private geospatial community.

Earlier this year, H.R. 5777 was introduced in Congress. If enacted, this bill (or a discussion draft that was circulated but not formally introduced), would have created havoc in the geospatial marketplace and community.

Specifically, we were concerned that privacy legislation, or FCC regulation, that imprecisely uses and regulates the term "precise geolocation information" would adversely impact consumers, geospatial firms, and government programs. We were particularly concerned that this term was not defined in the draft and introduced legislation.

The geospatial community is one of the fastest growing in the marketplace. It has been identified by the U.S. Department of Labor as one of the "high growth" sectors of the U.S. workforce. We are concerned that unintended consequences of future FCC regulation will stymie economic growth, job creation, and introduction of new consumer products enabled by geospatial technologies.

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The use of the term “geolocation” or other geospatial relevant terminology that may appear in future FCC regulation could impose a significant new liability on our members. Also, it could thwart some common, legitimate, and emerging uses of geospatial data for emergency response/post disaster remediation, insurance, environmental protection, E-911 & ambulance services, fleet management broadband mapping, home security, navigation, mortgage foreclosure monitoring/early warning system, and others. Moreover, activities, technologies, and applications development could be deemed illegal. For example, it would be impractical, if not impossible, for our member firms to obtain prior approval or consent from individual citizens prior to acquiring or applying data such as satellite imagery, aerial photography, or parcel, address, or transportation data. A FCC regulation of this nature would effectively ban our member firms, or their clients, from important value-added, integration and application activities.

Finally, any such FCC regulation could put U.S. companies at a significant and insurmountable competitive disadvantage against foreign firms that may not be covered by that regulation, or for which enforcement would be impractical.

We look forward to working with you and the FCC to provide the necessary and desirable privacy protections to individual citizens, while permitting the geospatial community to grow, prosper, and bring to the market those technologies and applications that meet the economic demands of consumers and citizens.

If you have any questions, or if we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact John “JB” Byrd, MAPPS Government Affairs Manager.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Palatiello". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being particularly prominent.

John M. Palatiello  
Executive Director