

FCC Collects \$13.9B In Bids In Radio Spectrum Auction

The FCC closed its latest airwaves auction Monday, collecting \$13.9 billion in bids.

The 28-day auction sold 1,087 licenses, the largest amount of radio spectrum for wireless services. "Spectrum is the backbone of the wireless industry. The FCC auction process allows spectrum to be put to its highest and best uses," Wireless Broadband Coalition Executive Director David Taylor said in a statement.

The top bidder was T-Mobile, the fourth-largest U.S. wireless provider, under the ownership of Deutsche Telekom AG of Germany, which bid \$4.2 billion for 120 licenses. The second-highest bidder was Verizon Wireless, the nation's No. 2 wireless provider, which bid \$2.8 billion for 13 licenses. SpectrumCo, a consortium of cable companies headed by Comcast, bid \$2.4 billion for 137 licenses. Cingular, the nation's top wireless provider, bid \$1.3 billion for 48 licenses.

Wireless DBS, a partnership between satellite providers DirecTV and EchoStar, had been the highest bidder until the group exited the auction. The amount collected was within a CBO prediction of \$10 billion to \$15 billion raised.

The next large spectrum auction will be of licenses held by broadcast television stations that will be changing frequencies due to the transition to digital broadcasting.