

NON-PROFITS SUE SPRINT, CLEARWIRE OVER WIMAX SHUTDOWN, DSL REPORTS

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Read More: <http://www.dslreports.com/shownews/NonProfits-Sue-Sprint-Clearwire-Over-WiMax-Shutdown-135415>

As we've noted for some time, Sprint is poised to shut down its now outdated Clearwire network as it shifts all of its customers to LTE and refarms that spectrum. While most customers are simply making the jump to Sprint's LTE network (or a competitor), Sprint is now facing a new lawsuit (pdf) claiming the shutdown will harm hundreds of thousands of low-income Americans by severing a current deal Clearwire had with two non-profits, Mobile Beacon and Mobile Citizen.

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The two non-profits own spectrum that was granted to them by the FCC to aid educational connectivity. Both outfits struck a 30 year deal with Clearwire back in 2006, before it was acquired by Sprint. Under this deal, the non-profits leased their spectrum to Clearwire, in exchange for payments and discounted mobile hotspots and service.

But the non-profits now say that as Sprint proceeds to dismantle its WiMax network and refarm the spectrum for LTE, the company has refused to strike a new, similar deal for the 429 schools, 61 libraries, and 1820 nonprofits feeding low-cost broadband to an estimated 300,000 low-income Americans.

"Sprint is appropriating the commercial spectrum capacity provided by plaintiffs under contract with Clearwire for use in Sprint's own broadband wireless network without the consent of plaintiffs to this diversion," notes the suit. "Also at the same time, Sprint is denying plaintiffs the quality and quantity of in-kind access royalties in the form of Internet access accounts, user devices and related support required to be delivered under those agreements."

There's a bit more detail over at the Mobile Citizen website.