IR phonons induced by the helical magnetic order in multiferroic TbMn$_2$O$_5$\textsuperscript{1} ROLANDO VALDES AGUILAR, A. SUSHKOV, H.D. DREW, University of Maryland. College Park, MD 20742, S.W. CHEONG, Rutgers University. Piscataway, NJ 08854 — The interplay between magnetic order and the lattice in multiferroic crystals has produced such interesting phenomena as polarization reversal and change of dielectric properties with magnetic fields \textsuperscript{2}. Ferroelectricity in the multiferroic materials REMn$_2$O$_5$ (RE = rare earth) is thought to originate from a helical antiferromagnetic order. In order to study this possibility we have made an infrared study of TbMn$_2$O$_5$. We find that several IR phonons show correlations with the distinct magnetic and dielectric phase transitions. Of special interest is the phonon spectrum for light polarization along the b axis where a mode at $\sim 706$ cm$^{-1}$ exists only in the commensurate magnetic phase with $k = (1/2,0,1/4)$ in the temperature range of 24-33 K. Possible scenarios for this phonon are: (1) the appearance of zone-folded modes; (2) the activation of previously silent modes due to the reduction of crystal symmetry. These scenarios are discussed in terms of the spin-lattice coupling in this class of materials.

\textsuperscript{1}Work supported by NSF-MRSEC under grant DMR-0520471