

**Opening Statement
Hearing on “Promoting Broadband Infrastructure Investment”
July 21, 2015**

Statement

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Today’s hearing is a crucial part of our national dialogue about the importance of rebuilding our infrastructure. Access to broadband is no longer an indulgence for the rich—it is an indispensable part of all of our lives. That is certainly true in urban areas—but it is just as true in the vast rural areas we have in Iowa.

I heard this loud and clear earlier this year during a Broadband Access Roundtable Tour that I took across my district. This is was not a short trip, either. I sat down to visit with my constituents in every one of the 24 counties that I represent. I took the time to make this trip because access to broadband is vital to survival in today’s economy.

And at every stop—every one—I heard that we need to do more to expand the reach of high-speed Internet access. But broadband that costs hundreds of dollars is not good enough. Because low-income Americans deserve affordable Internet access whether they live in a city or on a farm.

Mr. Adelstein, I appreciate your testimony regarding the importance of utilizing spectrum efficiently to expand wireless broadband access. I agree that this limited resource needs to be optimized. That is why I introduced the Rural Spectrum Accessibility Act with Rep. Kinzinger, which will encourage spectrum license holders to lease unused spectrum to small rural carriers to expand wireless coverage in rural communities.

I'd like to thank the witnesses for being here today, and I look forward to hearing their suggestions on how we can move forward on this important issue.