



COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRATS
ENERGY & COMMERCE
RANKING MEMBER FRANK PALLONE, JR.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Statement of Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr., as prepared for delivery
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Markup of Communications Infrastructure Discussion Draft**

As we all know, consumer demand for high-speed broadband is only going up. To meet this demand, we must continue to invest in our nation's communications networks – just like our nation's other infrastructure. These are the networks that keep us in touch every day and keep us connected during emergencies. That is why, Congress's priority should never be whether to invest in this critical infrastructure but how we invest.

The best way to build a sound infrastructure is to ensure that both industry and the government are working together. The bipartisan draft bill we are marking up today demonstrates how this is done.

This bill focuses on sound and practical ideas to help the private and public sector work together to benefit the American people. For instance, this committee has repeatedly been told that broadband siting reviews can slow broadband deployment to some of the hardest to reach areas in the country. The solution proposed in this draft would have agencies streamline their internal procedures. In exchange, the agencies will be given the authority to collect fees from the applicants to help pay for the speedier reviews. The end result: consumers get connected faster.

These types of sensible solutions are the result of tireless bipartisan work across this subcommittee. But there is no rest for the weary—more must be done. Because more and more of our communications needs are going wireless. That means we need more infrastructure, but we also need spectrum. The Budget Deal we reached a few weeks ago was a good start, but I hope we can continue our bipartisan efforts to free more airwaves for commercial broadband. That's why we're also marking up the Federal Spectrum Incentive Act, introduced by Rep. Doris Matsui. This way, we're working both sides of the problem.

Only by continuing these twin efforts of improving network infrastructure and freeing up more spectrum can we meet consumer demands. And by working together, as we have done with these pieces of legislation, we can show the country that their government can still work for them.

I'd like to thank Chairman Upton, Chairman Walden, and Ranking Member Eshoo and all of their staffs for all their efforts and dedication to meeting consumer demand and doing it the right way.

Finally, I'd like to thank the Ranking Member of the House Committee on Natural Resources, Mr. Grijalva, and his staff, for helping us improve this draft bill in very meaningful ways so that these changes do not sacrifice or negatively impact the environment.

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