

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton**  
**Subcommittee on Communications and Technology**  
**Markup of a Draft Bill on Broadband Infrastructure Deployment and the Federal**  
**Spectrum Incentive Act**  
**December 2, 2015**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

There's no doubt that increasing available spectrum and simplifying broadband buildout processes for commercial use are vital steps in ensuring America's continued broadband leadership. The explosion of mobile wireless broadband has transformed the way folks in Michigan and across the country communicate, consume information, and use all of the services the Internet has to offer. To keep up with the ever-growing demand of this flourishing sector of the economy, broadband communications providers – both wired and wireless – must innovate and invest constantly.

Both bills before the subcommittee today aim to make those investments happen. These bills are the result of bipartisan efforts to increase the ability of our country's communications providers to invest in networks and bring the power and freedom of broadband to every corner of the country. Areas that don't have access will be disadvantaged, left behind socially and economically, and we are trying to fix that. The Federal Spectrum Incentive Act seeks to financially incentivize federal agencies to relinquish unused or unneeded spectrum, opening up additional spectrum to be auctioned for commercial use.

The broadband legislation combines good policies that eliminate hurdles infrastructure builders must navigate in order to build the broadband backbone of our national economy. Two previous administrations have attempted to cut back the endless reviews, requirements, and requests that hinder efficient, timely, and economic deployment of communications infrastructure. But some of these changes can only come from Congress and it's time that we take action.

Southwest Michigan needs broadband investment just like communities across the country. It is imperative that we make it easier for development in small towns like Dowagiac in my district so that our rural communities can continue to compete in the 21st Century global marketplace.

I am confident that the hard work this subcommittee has produced are good policies that will become productive laws. The broadband economy is our nation's job creation engine, and we should be working to support it, not enacting laws and regulatory policies that hinder it. I hope that we can continue this bipartisan effort to help our nation's communications networks thrive and lead our global economy.

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