

**Opening Statement of Chairman Marsha Blackburn  
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology  
“Subcommittee Markup”  
October 11, 2017**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

Good afternoon and welcome to today’s subcommittee markup. Today we will be marking up a discussion draft of the FCC Reauthorization Act. At the beginning of this Congress, we made clear that a priority of the Committee would be reauthorizing agencies within our jurisdiction. Today we start with the Federal Communications Commission – an agency that has not been authorized in over 25 years. The appropriation level when the Commission was last authorized was \$109 million. Today it is over 430 million, yet the agency’s authorizing statute has not been revisited.

The FCC is charged with the administration of the Communications Act and other statute that govern our country’s communications policy. The agency plays an increasingly important role as society becomes more dependent on technology, and the authorizing statute needs to be updated to reflect the current state of the communications marketplace.

The subcommittee held an FCC oversight hearing in July, during which the subcommittee discussed the need to reauthorize the agency. Since that time, staff has been working on a draft that makes technical changes to the existing Communications Act and also incorporates a number of bipartisan measures focused on agency efficiency and transparency and public safety.

The discussion draft before us today updates the Commission’s application and regulatory fee structure, requires the Commission to adopt rules governing agency process, and establishes the independence of the agency’s Inspector General.

While the draft incorporates many important reforms, we will continue having discussions with members of this committee about the inclusion of additional

measures before consideration of the full committee. I look forward to an important discussion today and to advancing this legislation forward.

Thank you.