

Rep. Leonard Lance  
NTIA Reauthorization  
Opening Statement

Thank you Chairman Blackburn and thank you to our distinguished panel for appearing before us today.

Following the landmark, bipartisan passage of RAY BAUMS Act earlier this year, which reauthorized the FCC for the first time since 1990, we are now looking to reauthorize the NTIA for the first time since 1992. I commend the Chairman for fulfilling the Subcommittee's authorizing duties.

I am pleased that the draft legislation also includes the ACCESS BROADBAND Act, which I introduced last year with Congressman Tonko and that we recently reported unanimously out of this subcommittee. The bill would create a new office in within NTIA tasked with tracking all Federal broadband support programs across several agencies, and ensuring Federal broadband funds are used efficiently. It is important to recognize that Federal funds for broadband deployment are finite and must be focused on the areas of the country that need it the most. This new office will help make sure that agencies are not duplicating each other's efforts by overbuilding broadband infrastructure.

While the standalone bill continues through the Committee process, I believe it still makes sense to include it with the reauthorization language before us today. During my conversations with NTIA before and after introduction of ACCESS BROADBAND, they have emphasized the need for additional resources to implement this new office properly. By reauthorizing NTIA for the first time in 26 years, we provide them with those additional resources.

I thank the panel for being with us and look forward to discussing these and other important issues facing the NTIA.