

Rep. Leonard Lance
Opening Statement
Rural Broadband Deployment

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

As broadband access becomes more and more important to success in the 21st century economy, closing the digital divide is an increasingly important issue facing our Nation.

For my part, I have introduced the AIRWAVES Act with Ranking Member Doyle, which, among other things, would help spur rural broadband deployment by dedicating ten percent of spectrum auction proceeds under the bill to rural broadband. Had this “rural dividend” been in place during the previous two spectrum auctions, over \$6 billion would have been raised for rural buildout.

It is also important that we recognize that any federal funds for broadband deployment will be finite. I have worked hard to pursue policies to ensure coordination between various agencies involved in broadband deployment, encourage concentration on unserved areas and generally avoiding over building of areas already served by a broadband provider.

I ask unanimous consent to introduce a coalition letter of support for the AIRWAVES Act into the record and yield back the balance of my time.