

**Opening Statement of Republican Leader Bob Latta
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
“Our Wireless Future: Building A Comprehensive Approach to Spectrum
Policy”
July 16, 2019**

As Prepared for Delivery

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the subcommittee holding this hearing today and I thank both panels of witnesses for testifying, especially our government witnesses that are appearing on short notice.

I am pleased this subcommittee is returning to the important subject of spectrum policy. As the co-lead to both the Wi-Fi Caucus and the Rural Broadband Caucus, I know there is a careful balance we must achieve as we seek to clear more spectrum for the marketplace. Only through sound transparent light-touch policies, formed through effective coordination between government, consumers, and industry stakeholders, will we guarantee U.S. leadership in next generation wireless connectivity. This approach to the deployment of 5G will ensure that all people and all sectors of our economy can benefit from its innovative ripple effect. We will cover a lot of territory today, but it's important that the testimonies be considered in totality as we examine the implementation of key building blocks, such as clearing spectrum, for nationwide 5G deployment.

The FCC has made a huge swath of mid-band spectrum available in the incentive auction and has also successfully auctioned off spectrum in the high-band. I appreciate that the agency recognizes the importance of making America a leader in 5G and continue to focus efforts on clearing additional bands. There is no doubt that 5G will benefit urban areas, but I am also excited how it remakes Internet traffic management to prioritize low-band and mid-band spectrum for rural areas. In cities, the dense, high-speed networks provided over millimeter wave spectrum will unleash unlimited possibilities through the Internet of Things. Therefore, we must not undervalue the benefit of high-band spectrum as its quick deployment will make such IoT synergies possible as we add capacity. 5G will truly be disruptive in every sector from new technologies and innovations to an expanded workforce.

We must also discuss other technologies that play a critical role in connecting Americans and supporting 5G, such as Wi-Fi. Wi-Fi is a convenient development that all people enjoy and was meant to simply offer a no-wire solution. Certainly, its impact has been underestimated as we live in an increasingly connected world from streaming live TV from a hand-held device to smart thermostats to self-driving cars. Given the integration of Wi-Fi into our daily lives, I am intrigued by the FCC's recent proposal to expand unlicensed use in the 6 gigahertz band. Doing so would enable Wi-Fi to provide affordable connectivity across the

country, assuming such uses would not come at the detriment of another user.

Just as 5G and Wi-Fi are essential components to our telecommunications landscape, so is wireless broadband. Closing the digital divide is one of my top priorities, and wireless broadband is part of the solution. Spectrum can help students complete their homework, hospitals perform off-site tests and patient check-ups, and farmers operate precision agriculture equipment. In my district, I've witnessed first-hand the incredible value wireless technologies have on precision agriculture – such as drones and self-driving tractors that assist farmers with monitoring crops and livestock and analyzing soil. Access to broadband should not be dependent on one technology and spectrum allows for another avenue of delivery.

Spectrum is a valuable, yet limited resource that benefits consumers in so many ways. That is why we must have balanced policies that efficiently utilize bands, encourage innovation, and effectively address our nation's needs. I look forward to working with the Chairman and the members of the subcommittee as we continue our pursuit to reach such policy solutions, and to keep America ahead of the international

competition to win the race to 5G. Thank you again to our witnesses and I yield back.