

**Opening Statement of Republican Leader Cathy McMorris Rodgers**  
**Subcommittee on Communications and Technology**  
**“5G and Beyond: Exploring the Next Wireless Frontier”**  
**March 16, 2022**  
*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Before I begin, we just heard from President Zelensky, who is showing strong, courageous leadership for the freedom-loving people of Ukraine.

America must continue to stand and provide support for Ukraine’s destiny for freedom... that includes countering Putin’s evil and unjust attacks by ending his ability to use energy to fund this war and flipping the switch on our energy dominance for America and our allies.

This Committee has the opportunity to lead and I continue to urge that we do.

Now, to the topic of today. The success of our nation’s wireless future depends on good management of our spectrum resources.

The United States is a world leader in wireless technology. We led in deploying 4G, and today, our wireless carriers are working to make sure we lead in fifth-generation technology.

I climbed a 180-foot tower with Commissioner Brendan Carr and made the first 5G call in Eastern Washington. 5G is going to be a game-changer for rural communities.

To win the future, we must continue to make spectrum available, promote innovation, and keep up with demands for new and improved wireless technologies.

The efficient use of our spectrum resources will be essential to keep up with demand of wireless devices.

Under President Trump, the FCC made an unprecedented amount of spectrum available for commercial use, including over 3,400 megahertz of licensed millimeter wave spectrum, 280 megahertz of licensed spectrum in the C-Band, and an additional 100 megahertz of valuable mid-band spectrum in the 3450 to 3550 megahertz band. This brought in over \$100 billion.

Wireless carriers also worked closely with federal incumbents and the NTIA on developing technology in the 3.5 gigahertz band, known as the Citizens Broadband Radio Service (CBRS) band, which auctioned licensed spectrum while protecting Navy radars using the frequencies.

The FCC also made 1,200 megahertz of un-licensed spectrum available in the 6 gigahertz band. We are starting to see next generation technologies being developed to utilize that spectrum.

We must build on this success. Providing certainty to both industry and government agencies for spectrum reallocations and auctions is a top priority.

This includes addressing the FCC's expiring auction authority to ensure auctions, such as the 3.45 and 2.5 gigahertz bands, are successful and able to be completed, and making sure that costly fights, like we had between the FCC, NTIA, FAA, and industry over C-Band, do not become the norm.

Without that certainty, we cannot expect industry to invest the billions of dollars needed to clear spectrum bands in the future.

To maintain U.S. leadership in wireless technology, we need a national spectrum strategy that outlines goals, objectives, and actions that can be taken by federal agencies and industry to ensure the most efficient use of spectrum.

That said, even with a national strategy, repurposing spectrum is becoming more difficult. It's crucial that the FCC, NTIA, federal agencies, and wireless stakeholders work together. Federal agencies have legitimate spectrum needs for their systems.

However, the timeline for upgrading their systems to be more efficient does not keep pace with commercial technology. As spectrum repurposing has become more difficult, many federal agencies have resorted to public fearmongering rather than work through the established spectrum management process.

During recent, high-profile spectrum disputes, we've seen some agencies such as the Department of Transportation attempt to assert its authority over commercial spectrum bands where those agencies do not hold licenses.

These costly interagency battles threaten our ability to lead the world in next-gen communications. We must have trust in the expertise at the NTIA and the FCC, and confidence in the established process as we continue to push for a stable spectrum pipeline.

Meanwhile, adversaries like China and Russia are trying to undermine our leadership.

China is actively trying to use international standards setting institutions to set standards that favor their technology over ours. We must work together to enhance the participation by U.S. companies in the setting of international standards. My colleague, Mr. Walberg, is leading legislation that requires NTIA to do just that.

I also strongly support Doreen Bogdan-Martin's candidacy to become the Secretary General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Doreen is running against a candidate from the Russian Federation. Given recent atrocities by Russia, it is essential that we stand behind Doreen and help keep the Internet open and safe.

I look forward to hearing from the witnesses, and I yield back.