

Statement for the Record of Rep. Anna G. Eshoo

Hearing on “Strengthening our Communications Networks: Legislation to Connect and Protect”
House Subcommittee on Communications & Technology
May 24, 2022

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this legislative hearing on several important bills.

I’m highly pleased that the Subcommittee is discussing the bicameral legislation that I co-led with Rep. Kuster, H.R. 7132, the *Safe Connections Act*, to help survivors of domestic violence regain digital independence by ensuring they can remove themselves from shared phone plans with their abusive partners without prohibitive costs and contractual obligations. The legislation also tasks the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) with facilitating access to the Lifeline program to enable survivors to obtain new phones or phone services at discounted prices. These are critical measures to ensure survivors can quickly cut ties with their abusers and remain connected to their support networks.

I’m also pleased to see a bipartisan agreement on reauthorizing the FCC’s spectrum auction authority. This authority is so critical and we absolutely cannot afford to let it lapse. This 18-month extension is important and I support it. At the same time, we must authorize spectrum auctions beyond the 18-month timeline that will establish opportunities for Congress to direct investment in telecommunications programs that further the public interest. I’ve long championed the need for investing in next generation 9-1-1 (NG 9-1-1), and I urge this committee to fund investments in NG 9-1-1 upgrades from spectrum auction proceeds.

I look forward to a productive hearing.