

**Opening Statement of Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
“Launching into the State of the Satellite Communications
Industry.”**

February 2, 2023

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Good morning, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to congratulate you, Bob Latta, on leading the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology this Congress...

...and you, Buddy Carter, for becoming Vice Chair.

Under your leadership, I know this subcommittee will lead to help close the digital divide and ensure America leads a new era of innovation and entrepreneurship.

Congratulations to you, Ranking Member Matsui, on your new role too.

Finally, welcome to all our new members joining the Communications and Technology Subcommittee.

I'm looking forward to all the great work we will do together.

U.S. Leadership

We're here today to discuss how America can keep pace with the rapidly evolving satellite communications industry.

Countries like China seek to undermine us in a range of advanced communications technologies, including next-gen satellite technology.

We can't afford to let this happen.

The CCP will do whatever it takes to embed their authoritarianism into next generation technologies like these.

This is a country that spies on its citizens and asserts strict government control over businesses and the economy.

They want to replace the U.S. as an economic and technological power so they can spread their values and vision of the future.

We need to make sure these technologies are developed in an ecosystem that promotes America's values, not China's.

As this technology evolves, we must reevaluate and adapt the regulatory environment to make sure America is beating China...

...and continue to push the limits of innovation to solidify American dominance.

Satellite technologies have become vital to the communications marketplace... providing services to connect millions of American homes and businesses.

To ensure U.S. leadership, we need to foster a regulatory environment that encourages innovation...

...and guarantees that the reliable services they provide remain available to combat bad actors seeking to undermine our national interests.

Satellite Communications Marketplace

This Subcommittee is at the forefront of protecting and enhancing technological innovation in the U.S.

We're responsible for overseeing the Federal Communications Commission and National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

In recent years, the satellite marketplace has seen a surge of investment because of a combination of lower launch costs...

...to innovations that have made satellites more affordable, reliable, and available.

Some estimates show the space industry could triple to a \$1.4 trillion market within a decade...

...the FCC has received dozens of applications for new NGSO satellite systems, indicating that the industry is ready to lead in this space.

American satellite operators are providing in-home broadband at faster speeds than ever before...

...as well as key voice and data services to these industries and the Federal government.

Both longstanding operators and newer entrants have made or announced significant investments in next-generation systems.

It's been far too long since Congress reassessed the role of satellite technology in the communications marketplace...

...and whether or not our regulatory environment encourages investment and innovation in the space economy, or hampers it.

Today's hearing is our first step in what will be a robust effort to evaluate the state of the satellite marketplace.

Unleashing Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Many existing and proposed satellite systems raise novel questions about the use of space and spectrum that the FCC's rules do not address.

For example, large non-geostationary orbit, or N-G-S-O, satellite systems use spectrum more intensely than other types of satellite systems.

These NGSO systems are required to share spectrum, and the rules that govern sharing will be a critical ingredient to their success.

Moreover, the satellite marketplace is global.

Operators from around the world need to be able to license in many different regions, including the U.S.

Because of the global nature of the satellite industry, we need to consider international considerations on the use of spectrum...

...as well as orbital resources that are unique to the industry.

Closing

We must lead in this industry, and we must ensure that our regulations encourage this innovation, rather than stifle it.

I look forward to hearing more from our witnesses about the industry...

... and how this Committee can be a partner to promote U.S. leadership, competition, and innovation in satellite communications.

Thank you, and I yield back.