

**Opening Statement of Chair Robert E. Latta  
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology  
“Liftoff: Unleashing Innovation in Satellite Communications  
Technologies.”  
February 8, 2023**

Good morning! Thank you to our witnesses for agreeing to appear in person to provide your expertise on five pieces of bipartisan legislation and discussion drafts that aim to promote U.S. leadership in satellite communications technology.

Last week, this subcommittee held a hearing to discuss the state of the satellite marketplace in the United States. That hearing provided insight into the challenges and opportunities of the rapidly changing satellite marketplace. Today, we will hear from a different slate of witnesses representing a wide range of the satellite industry and how the legislative text being considered would impact the current regulatory landscape.

The five pieces of legislation include:

Chair Rodgers' **Satellite and Telecommunications Streamlining Act**, co-led by Ranking Member Pallone. This legislation would codify a statutory framework and streamline the Federal Communications Commission's satellite licensing process by clarifying what information the FCC should consider in an application, and put shot clocks on how much time the FCC has to complete its review and grant a license.

Next, we will discuss **the Secure Space Act**, led by Ranking Member Pallone and Chair Rodgers, which would prohibit the FCC from granting an authorization for a satellite service to operate in the United States if such satellite service poses a national security risk. This builds on the bipartisan work of this committee to secure our nation's communications networks on the ground by now looking to secure our services in space.

Next, we have Representative Johnson and Representative Schrier's **ALERT Parity Act**, which would establish a process for the FCC to ensure that satellite technology can be used to ensure access to wireless emergency alerts and 9-1-1 service remain uninterrupted during times of an emergency.

Then we have Representative Soto and Representative Dunn's **Launch Communications Act**, which would help streamline the process for approving access to wireless frequencies for commercial space launches and re-entries. Many times, this process requires approval by both the FCC and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, which can result in delay. This legislation would help improve that process.

And last but not least, we will discuss the **Precision Agriculture Satellite Connectivity Act**, led by myself and the gentlelady from Illinois'

second district, Representative Kelly. This legislation would require the FCC to look at its current satellite rules to determine if rule changes can be made to promote precision agriculture.

Despite the billions of dollars that have been made available for broadband deployment over the last few years, it is clear from traveling my district that too many Americans still lack access to the Internet. Republicans have long called for technology neutrality, and next-generation satellite networks provide broadband at speeds and latency that rivals other forms of broadband service.

Farmers and ranchers across America increasingly rely on technology to improve efficiency and yields while also minimizing costs. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, that technology must be connected to the Internet for its benefits to be fully realized. Gathering, processing, and sharing data in real time can help farmers and ranchers make better decisions.

While many farms and ranches have made progress getting access to terrestrial fixed and wireless networks over time, we heard at our hearing last week that satellite technology can play a key role. In some cases, satellite technology can connect directly to equipment or sensors in the field, and in other cases satellite technology can provide backhaul to wireless towers nearby.

I am excited to be considering these 5 pieces of bipartisan legislation today. Thank you again to our witnesses for testifying, and I look forward to the discussion.