

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Full Committee Ranking Member Frank Pallone
Markup of 13 Bills, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
March 8, 2023

Today we are marking up 13 bipartisan bills that will collectively advance the next frontier of the commercial space industry, fortify our communications networks, improve coordination efforts between the agencies overseeing our airwaves, and help protect Americans from cyber threats.

Several of the bills we are marking up today will help ensure the U.S. continues to lead the world in next-generation technology by keeping pace with the rapidly evolving wireless and satellite industry. The Subcommittee's action on these bills will ensure the satellite marketplace remains competitive, nimble, and protected from untrusted actors.

First, I am pleased that we are considering H.R. 675, the Secure Space Act, bipartisan legislation that I reintroduced with Chair Rodgers earlier this year. This bill would extend the Secure and Trusted Communications Network Act framework to the U.S. licensing of non-geostationary orbit satellites to protect the public from untrusted entities and foreign adversaries. As innovative technologies expand the capabilities of satellites, we must protect this marketplace and its relevant supply chains from those who seek to harm us and our country.

Next, we will consider H.R. 1338, the Satellite and Telecommunications Streamlining Act, a bipartisan bill that Chair Rodgers and I reintroduced last week. The bill would streamline the satellite licensing process at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for certain satellite applications. This legislation will allow the United States to remain a global leader in space while also encouraging innovative satellite technologies to be developed and deployed here. Such efforts are imperative given other countries, including our foreign adversaries, are making aggressive moves to dominate the industry. In the last few years, the combined satellite fleets of China and Russia have grown by about 70 percent. We must ensure that American satellite operators continue to lead the world.

We are also considering several other bipartisan pieces of legislation concerning the U.S. satellite marketplace. These bills will enhance our ability to launch satellites and allow consumers to benefit from innovative satellite uses, such as in the areas of precision agriculture and emergency services in rural areas or areas impacted by natural disasters.

The United States must remain a market leader in the satellite sector, and I am glad we are advancing this legislation. Failure to do so risks our nation falling behind both our allies and adversaries in producing innovative consumer services and fortifying our public safety and national security capabilities.

We will also be considering eight bipartisan bills that are designed to expand U.S. leadership in advanced communications technologies and provide the federal government with the means to enhance coordination and secure our communications networks and relevant supply chains. All these bills passed the House last Congress, and I am glad we are moving them forward again.

These bills will keep the public, smaller providers, and small businesses informed about how to protect their telecommunications networks and supply chains. They will enshrine important government bodies into law to ensure that our networks remain safe while also testing innovative new technologies. And they will facilitate U.S. leadership in the technologies of tomorrow and establish important parameters so that the FCC and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration remain in close coordination in overseeing our airwaves.

I appreciate the work of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to reach bipartisan agreement on these important bills so they were ready for markup today. And I also want to thank Chairs Rodgers and Latta, and Ranking Member Matsui for their leadership. I look forward to advancing these timely proposals to the full Committee.