

**Opening Statement of Chairman Brett Guthrie
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Permitting Markup
November 18, 2025**

Thank you, Chairman Hudson, for holding this important markup.

Streamlining the broadband permitting process is important for two, simple reasons: closing the digital divide and ensuring America’s leadership in artificial intelligence. Broadband is an essential part of everyday life but too many parts of this country, particularly rural areas like in parts of my district, are still unserved or underserved. And connectivity is essential for AI—from utilizing AI tools to processing and transmitting data. We need to build the networks capable of meeting this demand.

That is why we need to reform the permitting process and make it easier to deploy broadband. Today, this process often delays—or even prevents—building this important infrastructure. Unpredictable timelines, expensive—and sometimes duplicative—reviews, and the lack of transparency, all contribute to making deployment more challenging. Unless

we reform this process, the money and time that should be spent on deployment will instead be wasted navigating byzantine layers of red tape.

The legislation that we are marking up today—28 bills—will streamline the broadband permitting process and give providers the certainty and predictability they need as they plan their deployments. These bills:

- put timelines on state and local permitting reviews so providers know when they can expect decisions on their applications;
- limit application fees so that money can be spent on construction instead of paperwork;
- exempt certain projects from redundant and expensive environmental and historic preservation reviews;
- encourage federal agencies to prioritize broadband applications; and
- provide transparency into the opaque federal permitting-review process through requiring digital portals.

I want to thank each of the sponsors of these bills—both Republicans and Democrats—for their work and commitment to ensuring that every American has access to connectivity. I look forward to moving these bills through our process and signed into law.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.