

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Ranking Member Doris Matsui

Hearing on “Securing U.S. Leadership of Communications Technology”

March 18, 2026

Thank you, Chairman Hudson.

I’m glad we’re holding this hearing today on a deeply bipartisan priority: ensuring the United States is ready to lead at the next World Radio-communication Conference. For many people, the W-R-C may sound far removed from everyday life. But the decisions made there have very real consequences for America’s economy, national security, innovation ecosystem, and ability to shape the rules for communications technology on the world stage.

The W-R-C is where countries come together to update the global rules that govern spectrum and satellite orbits. Those rules help determine how nations coordinate, how a variety of advanced technologies, from Wi-Fi to 6G to satellites, grow and compete worldwide, and whether open, democratic countries like ours will continue to lead.

Quite simply, if the United States isn’t helping write those rules, someone else will. And we all know China is eager to fill that vacuum.

That’s why this process matters so much. When the United States comes to the table prepared, aligned, and working closely with our allies, we can be incredibly effective. We can rally support around a shared vision rooted in openness, transparency, innovation, and the rule of law.

And getting this right matters even more as AI becomes increasingly embedded in the technologies people rely on every day. AI is being integrated into our devices, our networks, and the communications systems that power our economy. That means the infrastructure decisions we make today will shape how securely and effectively those technologies develop for years to come.

If the United States wants to lead in AI, we also have to lead in the communications foundation that supports it. That’s why we can’t afford to wait until the last minute to build consensus. We need serious inter-agency coordination, early engagement with allies, and a clear sense of our priorities well before W-R-C 2027 begins.

As the Chair of the Spectrum Caucus, I’ve long believed that spectrum policy is about more than any single piece of technology. It’s about whether America has a durable, forward looking strategy to stay competitive in a rapidly changing world.

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The importance of W-R-C discussions go beyond communications here on the ground. Satellite issues will make up 80 percent of the conference agenda, and America's leadership in space is one of our great strategic advantages.

Our satellite companies are driving innovation, expanding connectivity, and helping define the future of global communications. We should be making sure international rules support U.S. leadership, not undermine it.

To put a finer point on it: W-R-C 2027 will be held in Shanghai. That alone should focus our attention. The United States can't be scrambling to catch up while China works to shape the field around us.

So today, I hope we can focus on what it will take for the United States to succeed: early preparation, strong diplomacy, coordinated agenda setting, and a commitment to entering W-R-C 2027 with one voice.

I want to thank our witnesses for being here today, and I look forward to the discussion.

With that, I yield back.