

Opening Statement for Chairman Richard Hudson
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Markup of Communications Bills
Tuesday, September 1, 2026

Good afternoon, and welcome to today's subcommittee markup of six bipartisan telecommunications bills. These important pieces of legislation will bolster American leadership in communications, secure our networks from threats, and improve how the federal government gets broadband to those who still need it. I am pleased to see the subcommittee move forward with these bills.

Three of the bills we are considering deal with threats to our networks, many of which originate abroad. The GUARD Act addresses robotic technology developed by our adversaries that has the potential to collect data and spy on Americans and whose operations can be manipulated by these adversaries.

Removing this threat, especially before this technology becomes more widespread, is critical to our national and economic security.

The Foreign Robocalls Elimination Act, as its name suggests, seeks to protect our networks from foreign robocalls.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, the majority of the robocalls that annoy and defraud Americans originate abroad. This bill would create a task force to make recommendations on how to combat those calls, make important reforms to improve the traceback work—which identifies the origins of robocalls, and make it harder for untrusted carriers to bring traffic onto our networks. These are critical steps to ensuring these calls do not reach Americans. This bill strikes an important balance between taking action to reduce unwanted and illegal robocalls without adding unnecessary burdens on legitimate businesses trying to reach consumers.

Next is the AI for Secure Networks Act. This bill would direct a study on the impact of artificial intelligence on the security of communications networks. Although we know AI can pose a threat to our networks, we can also leverage it to *protect* our networks. Understanding how we can do this will ensure efficient, resilient, and secure networks moving forward.

We are also marking up two bills to address broadband deployment.

The PLAN for Broadband Act directs the NTIA to develop a government-wide strategy for closing the digital divide. This bill implements a recommendation from a Government Accountability Office report that found the federal government has over 130 broadband programs spread across 15 agencies. A strategy will ensure these programs are better coordinated so we can efficiently close the digital divide. In addition, the Data Bridge Act would direct the FCC to include agricultural areas on

its National Broadband Maps. This would ensure we know which agricultural areas still lack service and can better target resources to those areas.

I want to thank my colleagues for their continued commitment to these issues and for their work developing these proposals. I look forward to moving these bills through committee and onto the floor.

[end statement]