



Competitive Carriers Association
Rural • Regional • Nationwide®

March 3, 2016

The Honorable Michael Burgess
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing,
and Technology
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC, 20515

The Honorable Janice Schakowsky
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing,
and Technology
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Burgess and Ranking Member Schakowsky:

Competitive Carriers Association (CCA) respectfully submits this letter for the record regarding today's hearing on "Disrupter Series: Wearable Devices." CCA is the nation's leading association for competitive wireless providers and stakeholders across the United States. CCA's membership includes nearly 100 competitive wireless providers ranging from small, rural carriers serving fewer than 5,000 customers to regional and national providers serving millions of customers. CCA also represents close to 200 associate members including vendors and suppliers that provide products and services throughout the mobile communications supply chain. From our members' experience constructing networks and providing wireless connections that help to facilitate continued innovation and growth in wearables, we have seen firsthand how new technology supports advances in healthcare, public safety, and economic opportunities. Importantly, these advances are not limited to densely-populated urban areas, but are changing lives in rural America as well.

In the rural Mississippi Delta, the University of Mississippi Medical Center, GE Care Innovation, and C Spire all collaborated to deploy and utilize wireless glucometers, sphygmomanometers (blood pressure cuffs), scales, and tablets that transmit vital health data and video conference to and from healthcare providers when necessary, which is helping to produce immediate results to control diabetes and reduce patient trips and admissions to the hospital. Similarly, in agricultural communities, connected devices, smartphones, and tablets are revolutionizing precision agriculture, with farms using 30 to 40 gigabytes of data per month during peak usage. On dairy farms, connected ear tags for cattle are monitoring and wirelessly transferring temperature and vital signs, animal tracking, and other characteristics that are improving the efficiency of the dairy industry. And in education, technology supporting distance learning is providing opportunities for students to learn beyond rural classrooms. These new innovations and opportunities only will continue to grow and expand, in addition to the constantly evolving wearable technology covering health, education, fitness, and other activities that consumers are utilizing across the nation.

To foster continued growth, we appreciate policymakers' focus on promoting expansion of wireless broadband networks and help to ensure competition. This includes policies that make additional licensed and unlicensed spectrum available to help satisfy continued demand for mobile data in ways that provide carriers of all sizes meaningful opportunities to gain access to spectrum, as well as streamlining barriers to deployment of physical network infrastructure and ensuring access to backhaul

and networks. Congress should also ensure that existing and future support of the Universal Service Fund is focused on deploying broadband efficiently and effectively, including mobile broadband services. Wearables and other devices should be interoperable to the extent possible, so that consumers do not have to choose between access to the networks and systems that suit them best and the latest technology. Finally, policymakers should carefully consider privacy and security concerns to adequately protect consumers without placing undue burdens on carriers or other developers.

Wearables must continue to represent exponential growth in both urban and rural areas as progress continues towards 5G and the Internet of Things (IoT). If proper policies exist, wearable technology, like other IoT technology, can have a meaningful impact on underserved communities. CCA appreciates the Subcommittee's focus on this issue, and looks forward to continued work with policymakers to expand competition and innovation moving forward.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Steven K. Berry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Steven K. Berry
President & CEO
Competitive Carriers Association