

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Robert E. Latta**  
**Subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection**  
**Hearing on “Disrupter Series: Smart Communities”**  
**March 16, 2017**

*(As prepared for delivery)*

Good morning and welcome to our second Disrupter Series hearing in two days. Thank you to our panelists for being here to testify. We sincerely appreciate your flexibility as things moved around due to our full Committee markup last week. The topic for today’s hearing is Smart Communities. One of the hallmarks of the Disrupter Series is looking at emerging technologies and platforms to understand how technology is bringing new benefits to the consumer while disrupting traditional markets and regulatory models.

Today we have the opportunity to look at these issues from a slightly different perspective and hear from the folks on the ground evaluating new technologies in their communities. In some ways no marketplace is more important than the local government, where every service is paid for with hard earned tax dollars. Using new technologies at the local level, in our hometowns, may be able to deliver better services more efficiently.

Many of us sitting on the dais have experience in local government. While many of the challenges and political realities are similar, if not the same, to when we served, the speed of technology can also be measured by how many of these technologies were available to use years ago.

Leveraging new technology to provide, measure, and improve service to constituents in our communities is the ultimate goal. There are opportunities to improve education, traffic and health. We can drastically increase mobility and access to jobs. From safety to sanitation to the environment, communities that wisely invest in technologies can make a real difference in American’s lives.

While funding is an issue we all face, the first step is identifying the local issues that could truly be transformed by connected and other technologies. I am looking

forward to hearing from the witnesses on the panel about their ideas and experiences solving the most pressing local issues with new technology.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to Jennifer Gallagher from Columbus, Ohio on the panel this morning. As the winner of the Department of Transportation's Smart City Challenge, the city has quite a bit of work ahead of them to implement and deliver on their goal of reducing infant mortality. If there is one thing I am sure about, it is the ingenuity and grit of my fellow Ohioans to deliver for our constituents.

I would like to thank you all again, for adjusting your plans to be here with us this morning and I look forward to your testimony.