



COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY & COMMERCE
DEMOCRATS
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Luján Remarks on Innovations in Building Smart Communities

Washington, D.C. – *Rep. Ben Ray Luján (D-NM) delivered the following opening remarks at today's Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection Subcommittee hearing "Disrupter Series: Smart Communities":*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure to sit next to you for today's Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection subcommittee hearing on Smart Communities.

I thank you and the Ranking Members for working together to convene this hearing today and I thank all the witnesses for their attendance.

Let me begin by noting my appreciation for the title of today's hearing: "Smart Communities." Because in a state like my home of New Mexico, it really is about building smart communities and as I think today's hearing will show – there are exciting innovations happening everywhere – from the assembled cities here: Columbus, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Portland – to New Mexico, where we have with two national labs and Intel.

Take what's happening in Santa Fe. In New Mexico, water is a precious resource, which is why Santa Fe is deploying cellular smart meters to track consumption and to identify leaks and other problems.

These types of advancements improve quality of life, save money, and help policymakers make better decisions. However, there is no reason that these advancements should be reserved just for cities and Silicon Valley. We must act to prevent the development of a new digital divide by helping communities of all sizes adopt smart infrastructure solutions

To guarantee that smaller and rural communities aren't left behind, I am working with Senator Maria Cantwell and Congresswoman Suzan DelBene to develop legislation to promote the use of smart technologies while protecting privacy and guarding against cyber-attacks.

Our draft legislation seeks to:

- Enhance federal coordination of smart community efforts and provide communities with a resource guide and technical assistance.
- Leverage the expertise of our National Laboratories, including Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia in New Mexico, to help communities adopt smart infrastructure solutions.
- Launch regional demonstration efforts to test and advance smart community technologies and systems.
- Promote the development of a technology skilled workforce to support the development of smart communities.

We believe that this effort will make communities across the country more livable and sustainable. And there is no reason this effort shouldn't be a bipartisan effort.

I believe that this committee and this Congress has a responsibility to work together to ensure that every corner of America benefits from the infrastructure of tomorrow.

Which is why, critically, it isn't enough that we work together to advance the ideas under discussion today. We have to work together to deploy broadband infrastructure so that it reaches all Americans.

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