WASHINGTON, November 15, 2018—The Federal Communications Commission today approved the requests of four companies—Space Exploration Holdings, LLC (SpaceX), Kepler Communications, Inc. (Kepler), Telesat Canada (Telesat), and LeoSat MA, Inc. (LeoSat)—seeking to roll-out new and expanded services using proposed non-geostationary satellite orbit (NGSO) satellites. These proposed satellite systems are expected to enable fixed satellite service in the United States, expanding global connectivity and advancing the goals of increasing high-speed broadband availability and competition in the marketplace.

In a Memorandum Opinion, Order and Authorization, the Commission granted SpaceX’s application with certain conditions, authorizing SpaceX to construct, deploy, and operate a new very-low-Earth orbit constellation of more than 7,000 satellites using V-band frequencies. The Commission also granted SpaceX’s request to add the 37.5-42.0 GHz, and 47.2-50.2 GHz frequency bands to its previously authorized NGSO constellation. The Commission’s action provides SpaceX with additional flexibility to provide both diverse geographic coverage and the capacity to support a wide range of broadband and communications services for residential, commercial, institutional, governmental, and professional users in the United States and globally.

In an Order and Declaratory Ruling, the Commission granted Kepler’s request for U.S. market access with certain conditions. The Commission’s action will allow Kepler to offer global connectivity for the Internet of Things, especially sensors and other intelligent devices as well as other FSS offerings using its proposed constellation of NGSO satellites in the 10.7-12.7 GHz and 14.0-14.5 GHz frequency bands. Kepler’s proposed NGSO system, consisting of 140 satellites, is licensed by Canada.

In an Order and Declaratory Ruling, the Commission granted Telesat’s request for U.S. market access with certain conditions in the 37.5-42.0 GHz, and 47.2-50.2 GHz frequency bands. The Commission’s action enables Telesat to offer high-speed, low-latency communication services in the United States using its proposed constellation of NGSO satellites enhancing competition among existing and future FSS satellite systems. Telesat’s proposed NGSO system, consisting of 117 satellites, is licensed by Canada.

In an Order and Declaratory Ruling, the Commission also granted LeoSat’s request for U.S. market access with certain conditions in the 17.8-18.6 GHz, 18.8-19.4 GHz, 19.6-20.2 GHz, 27.5-29.1 GHz, and 29.5-30.0 GHz frequency bands, using its proposed constellation of NGSO satellites. Today’s action facilitates the provision of new and innovative satellite broadband services in the United States by LeoSat, including high-speed connectivity for enterprises and
underserved communities. LeoSat’s proposed NGSO system consists of 78 satellites, which will operate under the ITU filings of France and a planned authorization from the Netherlands.

With today’s actions, the FCC has granted 13 market access requests and satellite applications to nine companies for NGSO FSS constellations seeking authority to provide next-generation connectivity across the country in the past 18 months. The Commission continues to process additional requests.

Action by the Commission November 15, 2018 by Memorandum Opinion, Order and Authorization (FCC 18-161); Order and Declaratory Ruling (FCC 18-162); Order and Declaratory Ruling (FCC 18-163); and Order and Declaratory Ruling (FCC 18-164). Chairman Pai, Commissioners O’Rielly, Carr, and Rosenworcel approving each. Chairman Pai, Commissioners O’Rielly, Carr, and Rosenworcel issuing separate statements.


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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC. 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Cir 1974).