

United States Senate

September 19, 2019

COMMITTEES
ARMED SERVICES
BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS
THE BUDGET
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

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The Honorable Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai:

I am encouraged by the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) efforts to explore additional spectrum bands for delivering 5G services to communities across the country, including in rural America. These efforts will help ensure that the United States advances in 5G, and will aid in closing the digital divide.

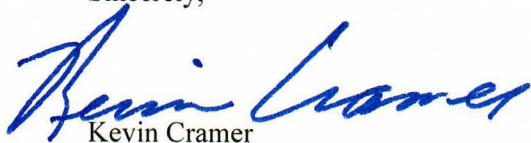
Mid-band spectrum in the 3.7-4.2 GHz band (or "C-Band") is particularly well-suited for 5G services. Given the importance of the C-Band to the deployment of 5G nationwide, I urge the Commission to repurpose as much of this spectrum as possible for 5G wireless use, while ensuring current video use is maintained and reliable during this transition of spectrum resources. I appreciate that broadcasters, cable operators, and video programmers use the C-Band to distribute programming, and the services provided by these groups must continue uninterrupted regardless of the framework adopted.

The FCC must also ensure that the C-Band auction is transparent and competitive, ensuring an inclusive, fair process for all interested parties. Therefore, I urge the FCC to strongly consider leading a traditional public auction for reapportionment of a percentage of C-Band spectrum. However, the FCC should not underestimate the importance of timeliness in freeing up spectrum so carriers can begin deploying 5G services more widely. 5G has the potential to unleash innovation across the American economy, and our nation stands to benefit from substantial job growth, positive economic ripple effects to the tune of trillions of dollars, and a competitive edge over our adversaries. Should the FCC elect to lead the auction, freeing up C-Band spectrum for 5G deployment with a single auction in a timely manner is paramount.

Lastly, I commend the FCC for having greater focus on rural America under the Trump Administration. Any C-Band auction should preserve value for taxpayers, especially those in rural parts of the country. In the C-Band auction, as with others, a portion of the spectrum licenses ought to be reserved for firms serving rural areas, and a substantial percentage of the auction proceeds should be allocated to broadband programs administered by the FCC, with priority given to unserved communities.

It is important that the Commission adopt a framework for the C-Band through an auction that repurposes as much spectrum as feasible, in an open and transparent manner that benefits all Americans. The principles laid out in this letter offer the most effective path towards an expeditious and nationwide deployment of 5G.

Sincerely,



Kevin Cramer

United States Senator