



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE
CHAIRWOMAN

March 30, 2022

The Honorable Brett Guthrie
U.S. House of Representatives
2434 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Guthrie:

Thank you for your letter regarding the efforts of the Federal Communications Commission to update its satellite rules to ensure they keep pace with innovation in the American space sector. As you note, there have been significant advances in satellite technology that have the potential to bring broadband to consumers with higher speeds and lower latencies. In fact, 98 percent of all satellite launches in 2021 were deployed into low-earth orbit to provide internet access connectivity around the globe. These satellites can play a critical role in advancing our effort to connect everyone, everywhere.

Right now, the Commission is updating its satellite rules to better support a more vibrant satellite ecosystem. This is part of a broader effort to ensure American leadership and strength in the new space economy, lay the groundwork for competition that will benefit consumers and innovation, and safeguard the long-term sustainability of our outer space activities.

To start, I am increasing the size of the Commission's satellite division by 38 percent and speeding up the Commission's regulatory review processes to keep pace with the realities of today's satellite marketplace. The Commission also is opening up new opportunities for new or expanded satellite broadband networks. In November, the Commission cleared the way for two new low-Earth orbiting constellations that will bring broadband and internet of things services to consumers, businesses, and government customers. In August, the Commission launched a new processing round for non-Geostationary satellites that want to use the V-band, resulting in applications seeking approval for nearly 38,000 new satellites that will offer global broadband. In April, the Commission identified spectrum for the first time to support increased competition among commercial space launch providers and launch sites, which will help promote the industry overall.

As you note in your letter, in December the Commission started a proceeding to modernize its rules for newer, larger non-geostationary satellite orbit fixed-satellite service (NGSO FSS) systems. The proceeding is taking a hard look at our satellite rules to ensure that they encourage innovation and create a level playing field for new competitors. Right now, the Commission's rules grant a first-mover advantage to satellite companies in the form of a spectrum priority. That can be a good thing, especially if it provides early entrants the certainty they need to invest in costly satellite deployments. However, such an advantage may make it

more difficult for new competitors to enter this space. The Commission's rulemaking asks questions about whether it should sunset that first-mover advantage after some time, so that our rules reward investment while also creating the opportunity for new entrants to achieve a level playing field. The rulemaking also seeks comment on how to improve spectrum sharing and coordination between satellite operators.

Comments are due on March 25, 2022, with reply comments due on April 25, 2022. I look forward to the record that develops in this proceeding and to working with you on these important issues. In the meantime, I have asked that your letter be inserted into the record of the proceeding.

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jessica Rosenworcel", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE
CHAIRWOMAN

March 30, 2022

The Honorable Doris Matsui
U.S. House of Representatives
2311 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Matsui:

Thank you for your letter regarding the efforts of the Federal Communications Commission to update its satellite rules to ensure they keep pace with innovation in the American space sector. As you note, there have been significant advances in satellite technology that have the potential to bring broadband to consumers with higher speeds and lower latencies. In fact, 98 percent of all satellite launches in 2021 were deployed into low-earth orbit to provide internet access connectivity around the globe. These satellites can play a critical role in advancing our effort to connect everyone, everywhere.

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