



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1403

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July 8, 2022

Jessica Rosenworcel
Chair
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street NE
Washington, DC 20554

Chair Rosenworcel,

I write today regarding the 12 GHz proceeding (Docket 20-443) currently being considered at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The proceeding is of particular interest because of the national defense implications that a potential decision holds. Currently, the 12 GHz band is used for many purposes, one of which is to provide a critical link between satellites and users on the ground. This has been recently demonstrated in Ukraine, where a U.S.-licensed system is providing critical access in large swaths of the country that had been cut off from terrestrial networks by the Russian invasion.

If the United States' government does away with the current careful arrangement that operators abide by within this spectrum band, other nations will step in and take the lead in space-based internet and other next-generation technologies. China is investing billions of dollars and streamlining their approach to investment, research, development, and deployment in the space sector, and views the United States as their chief rival in the race for dominance of space. China already has plans to develop technologies like space-based internet to directly compete with U.S. systems. It is not surprising that the Chinese are watching the situation in Ukraine very closely, and it is essential that the U.S. understand just how important this free flow of information is. Beyond these national security considerations, next-generation technologies can be rapidly deployed to areas that have seen natural disasters strike and take out telecommunications systems.

Given the serious national security and geopolitical implications associated with repurposing the 12 GHz band, I urge the Commission to carefully consider any potential changes that would result in harming the U.S. national interest. I appreciate your attention to this matter, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


JIM BANKS
Member of Congress