

JASON SMITH
8TH DISTRICT, MISSOURI

REPUBLICAN LEADER
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

2418 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-4404
jasonsmith.house.gov

CAPE GIRARDEAU OFFICE
2502 TANNER DRIVE, SUITE 205
CAPE GIRARDEAU, MO 63703
(573) 335-0101

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jasonsmith.house.gov/newsletter

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2508

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FARMINGTON OFFICE
22 E. COLUMBIA STREET
PO BOX 1165
FARMINGTON, MO 63640
(573) 756-9755

POPLAR BLUFF OFFICE
2725 N. WESTWOOD BLVD., SUITE 5A
PO BOX 4707
POPLAR BLUFF, MO 63901
(573) 609-2996

ROLLA OFFICE
830A S. BISHOP AVE.
ROLLA, MO 65401
(573) 364-2455

WEST PLAINS OFFICE
35 COURT SQUARE, SUITE 300
WEST PLAINS, MO 65775
(417) 255-1515

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

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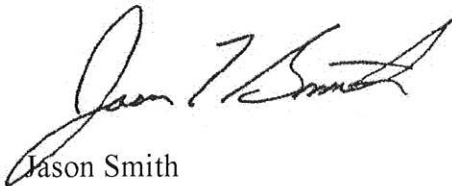
Chair Rosenworcel,

I write today regarding the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) (Docket 20-443 “Expanding Flexible Use of the 12.2-12.7 GHz Band”) at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). As a Congressman representing a rural district, I know the importance of high-speed internet in areas that have been historically underserved. The people I represent also know how important connectivity is, whether it’s for remote education, telehealth, or applications for farming and agriculture. This is why I am concerned with the possible disruptions to service that would result from repurposing the 12 GHz band of spectrum away from current users.

The 12 GHz band is currently being used by thousands of families in Missouri for high-speed internet, satellite television, and many other modern services that American households have come to rely on. During the pandemic, these modern telecommunications services became a literal lifeline for millions of Americans, which you yourself have noted many times. Technologies like next-generation satellite internet rely on specific frequencies that can serve as the primary link from satellites to consumers on the ground. Networks like this are an important component in closing the digital divide, and can offer a solution for rural parts of the country without other options for high-speed internet. Additionally, there is serious geopolitical risk to reducing access to this band for current users. Right now, in Ukraine, next-generation satellite services are providing access that is helping to counter Russian disinformation and aggression. China is also looking to build out a competitor system to the United States, and is clearing the regulatory decks and investing heavily in the space sector to directly compete with U.S. systems. It is not difficult to imagine the repercussions that would stem from China gaining the upper hand in the race to dominate this sector in the international realm.

The FCC made it clear at the beginning of this proceeding that unless non-interference with existing users could be demonstrated, no new rights would be warranted. To ensure that families, businesses, and the many other users currently relying on this band are not harmed, I ask that you carefully consider any action in this band. Thank you for looking into this important policy issue, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Jason Smith
Member of Congress