

**REMARKS OF  
CHAIRWOMAN JESSICA ROSENWORCEL  
THE GLOBAL AEROSPACE SUMMIT  
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Good afternoon, everyone. It's great to join you for the 2022 Global Aerospace Summit. Thank you to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for inviting me to join this discussion.

Sixty years ago this week President Kennedy kicked off the first space age in earnest when he stepped inside a football stadium at Rice University and declared that the United States would put a man on the moon. It's easily one of the most iconic speeches in our Nation's history. And you know the speech—it's the one where he said that we choose to go to the moon not because it is easy, but because it is hard.

You also know what comes next. Because just a few years later, three astronauts from the United States journeyed from a small Florida peninsula to a dry crater nearly two hundred and forty thousand miles away on the surface of the moon. You also know what comes after that. Hundreds of millions of people watched on black-and-white televisions and heard Neil Armstrong say, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Those images and words are justifiably famous. But here's a part of the story that you might not know. You see, just a few months before President Kennedy gave his moonshot speech, the United States launched the first communications satellite ever to go into orbit. It was called Telstar 1. Telstar 1 was a precursor of so much to come—not just because it ushered in a new era of connectivity, but because it was the world's first commercial space mission.

I am proud to say that the Telstar 1 launch was initiated by the Federal Communications Commission under the leadership of one of my predecessors, Newton Minow—who I must add is still going strong at age 96. Speaking about Telstar 1, Chairman Minow famously told President Kennedy that "communications satellites will be much more important than sending man into space, because they will send ideas into space. Ideas last longer than men."

I believe it. Telstar 1 reminds us that the United States is the place where we look to the skies, dream big, and make it happen. That's why I'm here today. I'm here because the FCC had big dreams for America's first space age. And we have big dreams now for America's second space age.

In fact, last month I had the privilege of joining the Vice President of the United States at the Chabot Space & Science Center in Oakland, California to talk about some of the things we are doing to help bring commercial space policy into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Last week, that effort continued when I spent time at the Johnson Space Center in Houston and joined the second meeting of the National Space Council.

So now I'd like to share with you what comes next.

Let me start by setting the stage. The FCC is responsible for the oversight of communications networks. That includes the use of our commercial airwaves. So satellite systems have long been a part of our portfolio. But what is happening now is new. Every day we see new companies, new business models, and new technologies that are pioneering a new space economy. Every day we see how the expansion of new space-based activities can remake our world—and that there is work to do to support all of this activity in our highest altitudes.

I believe the United States must lead in this new space age and emerging space economy. That's why I announced a new Space Innovation initiative at the FCC to help do just that. So far our initiative involves three lines of effort.

***First, we know we need new rules for the new Space Age.*** Here on the ground, the regulatory frameworks we rely on to shape space policy were largely built for another era. They were designed for a time when going to space was astronomically expensive and limited to the prowess of our political superpowers. No one imagined commercial space tourism taking hold; no one believed crowd-funded satellites and mega constellations at low-Earth orbit were possible; and no one could have conceived of the sheer popularity of space entrepreneurship.

But it's all happening. So across the board we are working to update our rules, bulk up our ranks at the FCC to support this policy, and speed up the commercial satellite licensing process. In fact, I am proud to say that we have increased the size of the agency division responsible for satellite matters by 38 percent. That means we've added more engineers and policy experts to our roster to help keep pace with all this new commercial activity.

***Second, we are promoting Space Innovation.*** This is important. Because it's not enough to refine the policies of the past. In the United States we need to build what is new. That is why in July I kicked off an effort to support new in-space servicing, assembly, and manufacturing—or ISAM—capabilities. ISAM capabilities can help us repair and refuel satellites in space, assemble whole systems in orbit, or even build entire new industries that advance our scientific frontiers and national security. Our inquiry will set the foundation to help us lead in the development of these capabilities.

On top of that, we are making more spectrum available to fuel our space ambitions. In July we decided to free up more spectrum in the 17 GHz band to support the growing demand for space-based services. Before that, we identified spectrum that, for the first time ever in the United States, we will dedicate to supporting commercial space launches—in the 2200-2290 MHz band. We also cleared the way for more satellite operators to use the 50.4-51.4 GHz band, proposed updates to our processing round rules for satellite systems to encourage more spectrum sharing and competition, and opened up new opportunities in the V-band to provide service nationwide. It's a lot.

***Third, we are supporting Space Sustainability.*** Growing the space economy requires action to care for our skies so that the space economy can support our grandest ambitions. But right now there are thousands of metric tons of orbital debris in the air above. We need to address it. Because if we don't, this space junk could constrain new opportunities.

To explain why, look all the way back to another satellite very early in our first space age. I'm talking about Vanguard 1. For billions of years, space was not a landscape for human endeavors. Then, of course, the space race began and in 1958 NASA launched Vanguard 1 into our skies—and it still circles the planet today.

Now at the time Vanguard 1 was a bold undertaking and a commitment to our connected future. But today it also represents something else—a reminder of the work we have to do to address orbital debris.

Since 1957, humanity has put 10,000 satellites into the sky. More than half of those satellites are now defunct. Many of them were launched with the understanding that they were cheaper to just abandon than to take out of orbit.

That means, like Vanguard 1, they stay in orbit for decades, careening around our increasingly crowded skies as space junk. That's bad because it raises the risk of collisions that harm satellites we count on, makes it harder to launch new objects into higher orbits, and even has environmental consequences back on Earth.

Fast forward to last week at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. At the meeting of the National Space Council I announced a new FCC effort to help clean up space and address orbital debris.

For years it has been the recommended practice for satellite operators to deorbit their spacecraft within 25 years of completing their missions. But 25 years is a long time. There is no reason to wait that long anymore, especially in low-Earth orbit. Our space economy is moving fast. For it to continue to grow, we need to do more to clean up after ourselves so space innovation can continue to expand.

So I announced a proposal that I shared with my FCC colleagues that would shorten this period from 25 years to five years. That's big. If adopted, it will mean more accountability and less risk of collisions that increase debris and the likelihood of space communications failures. I hope my colleagues will join me in this effort.

So there you have it. New rules, new innovation, and sustainability. Sixty years ago President Kennedy announced that we would go to the moon. It was not going to be easy. But the awe of that effort stays with us even today. That is why we are setting the foundation—or maybe I should say the launchpad—to go even farther and expand the opportunities in space. I look forward to working with all of you to make it happen.

Thank you.