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September 21, 2022

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

Chair Rosenworcel,

I write today regarding Docket 20-443 ("Expanding Flexible Use of the 12.2-12.7 GHz Band") that has been before the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) since January 2021. This Notice of Proposed Rulemaking is of particular importance because of the concerns that have been raised based on technical studies showing that hundreds of thousands of current users, including thousands in Arkansas, would potentially lose access to high-speed internet if the FCC repurposes the 12 GHz band. I ask that the FCC not take any action that would harm current users of services provided through this important band of spectrum, and that the Commission complete the technical review and bring the proceeding to a conclusion as soon as possible.

As a member of Congress representing a rural district, one of the most pressing challenges my constituents face is connectivity through broadband. To ensure access for necessities like education, healthcare, food security, and economic opportunity, access to high-speed internet is key. Therefore I have pressed for rural broadband development and new technologies that can help to close the rural-urban digital divide. There is no "one-size fits all" solution for connecting rural households and businesses, especially since the terrain and the pace of buildout is a serious challenge in many parts of the country. It is critical that we have options for families and businesses in rural communities who are unlikely to see fiber connections in the near future, or possibly ever.

One of the key technologies showing great potential is satellite internet provided through Low Earth Orbit (LEO) systems. This technology can serve as an important component in bringing high-speed internet to rural, urban, and suburban areas. Indeed, satellite internet is now providing critical connections for hundreds of thousands of consumers throughout the U.S., with even more hoping to benefit from this service in the future. This progress in bringing high-speed internet to rural communities is at risk due to the FCC's consideration of the NPRM on 12 GHz, specifically because of the interference that would result if a new high-powered mobile technology is authorized within the band.

Given the important role that new technologies like LEO satellite internet are playing and will play in the future for these communities, I encourage you to conclude the 12 GHz proceeding and not take any action that could reduce options for consumers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Crawford", is positioned above the typed name.

Rick Crawford
MEMBER OF CONGRESS