

# United States Senate

July 18, 2019

President Donald Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

I am writing to congratulate you on your leadership on expanding access to broadband and accelerating the deployment of next generation communications networks that will foster long term economic growth and benefit American consumers. Increased access to wireless services, including wireless broadband, are critically important to the way Louisianans live, work, and connect to the world.

The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government recently held a budget-related hearing with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Pai where he emphasized his focus on allocating more spectrum for 5G, especially mid-band spectrum that has the coverage and capabilities needed for fast, high capacity broadband. Both the government and the private sector play an important role in maximizing the use and efficiency of wireless spectrum. I encourage the White House to work with federal government agencies to get them to relinquish or share spectrum that is not being used efficiently.

Also at the hearing, Senators from both parties expressed concern over a proposal by the C-Band Alliance that, if adopted, would allow four foreign-owned satellite companies to reap billions of dollars in profits by selling valuable C-band spectrum (3.7-4.2 GHz). It seems preposterous to me that given our growing national debt we would send a significant portion of the proceeds from a sale of public spectrum to foreign owned businesses. Second, allowing the foreign satellite companies to oversee the sale of this important spectrum – rather than letting the FCC run a transparent public auction – would put our 5G future in the hands of foreign-owned companies who have every incentive to put their own financial self-interests above our own national security and economic priorities.

The foreign satellite companies have been working to limit the amount of spectrum being made available for 5G to less than half the amount of mid-band spectrum being devoted to 5G by China. These companies want to clear 200 MHz out of the available 500 MHz, which would constrain supply, artificially drive up prices, and allow the satellite companies to raise prices later when they eventually sell the remaining 300 MHz that are currently available. The C-Band Alliance proposal will cause Americans to pay more for video services, put us on track to losing the race to 5G with China, and decrease the likelihood that rural areas of our country will benefit from this mid-band spectrum. I fear that we will look back on this spectrum as our generation's "high-tech" Panama Canal where we abdicate control over a critical infrastructure asset to the detriment of our nation's economic and national security.

As you know from the many times you have visited Louisiana as president, our state has a vital and diverse rural population. Wireless coverage is critical to the farmers, fisherman, and hunters who spend much of their day in fields and marshes, often without access to a wireless signal. In the event of an accident or emergency, this can mean the difference between life and death. And on the Louisiana coast, wireless access is needed for the safety of the men and women who perform dangerous work on oil rigs but also to provide critical logistics and support to those operations. The bottom line is that wireless connectivity is vital to the health and safety of our people and our state's economic prosperity.

Once again President Trump, thank you for your leadership to advance the development and deployment of high-speed communications networks. I stand ready to work with you as you continue to help America reach its economic potential for the benefit of all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Kennedy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John Kennedy  
US Senator

cc: FCC Chairman Ajit Pai