



The Honorable Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai:

We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to take decisive action to make additional mid-band spectrum available without delay. Such expansion will allow for greater competition, innovation, and continued economic prosperity while keeping the United States competitive with China and the rest of the world on 5G deployment.

Our position is simple – government must not impede efforts to roll out the next-generation of wireless networks, but, rather, work to ensure scarce spectrum resources are used efficiently and that the market has the required certainty necessary to invest in U.S. wireless infrastructure. This framework requires policymakers to challenge the status quo and make timely decisions enabling the quick rollout of new commercial airwaves. As the expert regulatory agency on these issues, it is paramount that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) exercise its authority, supported by its engineering expertise, to bring more mid-band spectrum to market as soon as possible. Doing so will send a clear signal to the world that the U.S. is a force in 5G and the leader of this next digital revolution.

Under your leadership, the FCC has made important progress in steering our country's approach to 5G deployment and pursuing an "all-of-the-above" spectrum strategy. Most recently, we have seen great success with the auctioning of high-band spectrum, which will be a key piece of the 5G ecosystem. While this is a good start, it is undeniable that 5G requires a mix of spectrum to unlock its full potential, and the unfortunate truth is that the U.S. is currently behind in deploying mid-band frequencies. With strong, bold leadership, we can make up this deficit by resolving just a few key spectrum proceedings that are currently under Commission consideration and are ripe for action.

Our organizations support your efforts to accelerate America's superiority in 5G, including injecting more mid-band spectrum into the marketplace, updating infrastructure policy, and modernizing outdated regulations. The swift, efficient deployment of next-generation wireless technology will lead to faster data speeds, more responsive networks, and the ability to connect multiple devices at the same time. Moreover, 5G will contribute to a stronger American economy – creating 3 million new jobs, \$500 billion in economic growth, and \$275 billion in new investment. As you have noted, mid-band spectrum has propagation characteristics uniquely capable of adding coverage and capacity to our future wireless networks. This is essential for the development of 5G, and, if we get it right, will increase U.S. competitiveness and unleash the American entrepreneurial spirit on the world economic stage.

We understand that in an increasingly crowded spectrum environment, there will be attempts by certain agencies and interest groups to impede your efforts to allow new uses of spectrum by exploiting the

dysfunction of the bureaucracy. Agency after agency – DoT, DoD, DoE, DoC, NASA, NOAA – in proceeding after proceeding – 24 GHz, 5.9 GHz, 2.5 GHz, 3.1-3.55 GHz, L-band, and 6 GHz – has stepped in to block the introduction of more spectrum into the market which threatens to stifle innovation and hurt the economy. The FCC has the authority – and the responsibility – to take decisive action, and the country is depending on your leadership to counter attempts to slow-walk regulatory proceedings that are clearly in the public interest. The Commission must establish timelines and deadlines with respect to interaction with government agencies and ultimately weigh engineering evidence to reach final decisions that help maintain America’s competitive edge.

We urge you to move forward and approve new applications to keep pace with China’s superior speed of deployment. Specifically, the L-Band is a near-term opportunity that is uniquely suited for 5G deployment and is highly complementary to other spectrum bands already before the Commission, including the C-Band, CBRS, and mmW spectrum. These frequencies have languished in an endless cycle of regulatory review for nearly a decade, and we encourage the FCC to act this year to make this critical, greenfield, mid-band spectrum available. Upon approval, utilization of these airwaves can fuel the U.S. economy and be immediately deployed to benefit critical industries such as manufacturing, utilities, and transportation.

Under your direction, the FCC has championed a pro-market, pro-innovation regulatory approach to spectrum policy. We support and encourage your efforts to further solidify America’s global leadership in 5G technology, and our organizations are in agreement that unlocking mid-band spectrum as soon as possible, starting with the L-band this year, will strengthen our national economy and dramatically sharpen America’s competitiveness.

Respectfully,

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*The American Enterprise Institute (AEI) does not take institutional positions on any issues. The views expressed are those of the scholar.

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