ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
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MEMORANDUM

January 31, 2017

To: **Subcommittee on Communications and Technology Democratic Members and Staff**

Fr: **Committee on Energy and Commerce Democratic Staff**

Re: **Hearing on "Reauthorization of NTIA"**

On **Thursday, February 2, 2017, at 10:45 a.m. in room 2322 of the Rayburn House Office Building**, the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology will hold a hearing titled "Reauthorization of NTIA."

I.   BACKGROUND

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is an executive branch agency within the Department of Commerce. It is responsible for advising the President on telecommunications, information, and internet policy issues. In addition, NTIA performs other key functions:

- Spectrum Management: NTIA manages the Federal government's use of spectrum, and coordinates with the Federal Communications Commission regarding shared spectrum use between Federal and nonfederal entities.

- Broadband Opportunity Council (BOC): Along with the Department of Agriculture, NTIA is a co-chair of the Broadband Opportunity Council. The BOC is looking into how Federal agencies, industry, and other stakeholders can better support communities that seek broadband investment, as well as how to remove barriers to broadband adoption and deployment.

- Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP): NTIA oversees the $4 billion BTOP grant program. BTOP projects deploy broadband Internet infrastructure, enhance and expand public computer centers, and encourage the sustainable adoption of broadband service. As of the last update report, NTIA has assisted the completion of 275 BTOP projects, with five projects in active status. BTOP funding will be available for active grants until 2020, pursuant to the Continuing Resolution Act of 2016.

- State Broadband Initiative (SBI) Program: The SBI program provides grants to state entities to support the use of broadband technology to compete in the digital economy, as well as to help states collect data to support the National Broadband Map. NTIA has awarded $293 million since 2009, to entities in all 50 states, our five inhabited territories, and the District of Columbia.

- BroadbandUSA: NTIA created BroadbandUSA to provide technical assistance to communities seeking to expand broadband capacity and increase broadband adoption.

- Internet Policy Task Force: NTIA, along with the Patent and Trademark Office, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and International Trade Administration, participates in the Internet Policy Task Force. The task force is in the process of reviewing intersecting privacy policy, copyright, global free flow of information, cybersecurity, and innovation in the Internet economy.

- FirstNet: The First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) is an independent authority within NTIA. FirstNet is the licensee of the nationwide interoperable broadband network for first responders. It is responsible for building, deploying, and operating the network using $7 billion in proceeds raised through prior spectrum auctions.

- Public Safety Programs: NTIA, along with NIST, sponsor the Public Safety Communications Research program, which conducts research and testing to further development of public safety interoperability. NTIA also oversees the Public Safety Interoperable Communications grant program, which has awarded over $1 billion nationwide to fund projects to help first responders communicate during disasters. Additionally, NTIA, along with National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, will distribute, when available, the $115 million in NG911 funding awarded in the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012. Finally, NTIA will administer the $135 million State and Local Implementation Grant Program which supports State, regional, tribal and local jurisdictions' efforts to plan and work with FirstNet to ensure the network meets their wireless public safety communications needs.

- Multi-Stakeholder Processes: NTIA also conducts a number of multi-stakeholder processes to provide a forum for discussion and consensus-building among stakeholders on particular topics that are central to NTIA's mission. In recent years, the NTIA has conducting multi-stakeholder processes on unmanned aerial vehicles, cybersecurity, the internet of things, and privacy, among others.

II.   NTIA ORGANIZATION AND BUDGET

NTIA is led by an Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information with a staff of approximately 160 full-time employees who are organized into 11 offices to support agency activities. NTIA's enacted Fiscal Year 2016 budget was $39.5 million. For Fiscal Year 2017, NTIA requested $50.8 million. It seeks the $11 million increase to cover: (1) a realignment of resources in its broadband programs as the BTOP program transitions out; (2) the additional responsibilities required under the Spectrum Pipeline Act of 2015; and (3) additional needs to support NTIA's domestic and international programs related to cybersecurity and the IP transition.

Congress last reauthorized NTIA in 1992.

III. WITNESSES

Meredith Baker
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Anna Gomez
Partner
Wiley Rein LLP

John Kneuer
Former Acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information, former Acting Administrator, National Telecommunications and Information Administration