



COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY & COMMERCE
RANKING MEMBER FRANK PALLONE, JR.

DEMOCRATS

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**Statement of Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr., as prepared for delivery
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Legislative Hearing on Four Communications Bills**

Thank you Chairman Walden and Ranking Member Eshoo for holding this hearing today. Let me also thank our witnesses for being here. I know you are not strangers to this subcommittee and I appreciate your willingness to come up to testify.

I also appreciate the commitment Chairman Walden is showing to regular order. Legislative hearings like the one we are holding today do not simply check a box—they help our members and the public better understand the potential effects of the bills before us. When the committee is given opportunities to make reasonable and thoughtful decisions, we end up with better results.

I am particularly interested in learning more today about the bill prohibiting the FCC from regulating rates for broadband Internet access. I agree with the sentiment driving this bill. The Commission should not be setting rates for broadband access. In fact, we have heard from FCC Chairman Wheeler himself that he does not intend to set rates.

Nonetheless, I have also heard concerns that, as drafted, this bill may result in significant unintended consequences. For instance, some believe that it could spur endless litigation, leading to uncertainty in the market and deterring investment. Worse, the bill could seriously curtail the FCC's ability to protect consumers. Obviously, that result is not acceptable. Today's hearing gives us the chance to learn more about these potential consequences and whether the bill can be better targeted to avoid these pitfalls.

I also look forward to hearing more about the other three bills on today's agenda. Amateur radio, transparency into service provider practices, and prevention of fraudulent caller identification are all important topics, worthy of a fair hearing.

But while today's hearing marks a good start for the year, I hope that this is only the first legislative hearing we hold. I further hope that future hearings include ideas put forward by Democratic members, such as Congressman Welch's Digital Learning Equity Act, Congresswoman Matsui's Spectrum Challenge Prize Act, Congressman Lujan's FCC

Transparency Act, or even my own Viewer Protection Act or SANDy Act. All of these bills address pressing issues the American people care about. They deserve the opportunity to be heard.

With that, I look forward to the rest of the discussion today.

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