

Opening Statement
Chairman Mike Doyle
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Markup of 11 Bills
March 10, 2020

Good morning and welcome to today's markup by the Communications and Technology Subcommittee on eleven pieces of legislation. They span a range of important priorities to the members of this committee including public safety, network resiliency, disaster response, wireless alerting, suicide prevention, media diversity, and the C-Band.

We are going to start off today with consideration of Mr. Engel's "Don't Breakup the T-band Act," which I am a cosponsor of. This legislation would repeal a requirement in the 2012 Middle Class Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that the FCC sell this spectrum band.

In many communities around the country, including my own, public safety uses this band for essential communications services. Repealing this requirement will ensure that these users are not displaced, and that they can continue to use this band to provide critical life saving services.

I understand Ranking Member Walden has an amendment to this bill relating to 9-1-1 fee diversion. I support the amendment and I urge my colleagues to support the amendment and passage of this legislation.

Next up, we have Chairman Pallone's "Resilient Networks Act." This legislation takes a range of steps to encourage greater pre-planning and coordination among telecom providers. It would also encourage greater coordination between energy utilities and telecom providers to ensure that they are working with each other to maintain and restore network connectivity in times of crisis.

After that we will consider the Ready Act from Congressmen McNerney, Bilirakis, and Olson.

Next, will be the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act, introduced by Representatives Moulton and Stewart. This legislation would designate 9-8-8 as the national suicide hotline and allow states to impose a fee on telecom bills for the support and implementation of this service.

Suicide is an epidemic in our country, nearly fifty thousand American take their own lives every year, making it a leading cause of death in our country. We need to provide a lifeline to people who are at risk, and resources to the call center workers that are tasked with helping those in crisis.

After that we will consider Representative Matsui and Eshoo's "Emergency Reporting Act."

The next piece of legislation we will consider is the Phone Act from Representative Thompson. This legislation seeks to enable people in areas struck by disasters to keep their phone number if their home has been damaged or destroyed.

When you've lost everything and are searching for loved ones and shelter, it seems like the last thing on your mind would be calling your phone provider to make sure you keep your number.

This legislation takes important steps to ensure that individuals and communities can get back something of what they lost in these disasters.

We will next consider Congresswoman Deming's resolution reaffirming the House's commitment to media diversity and our continued efforts to eliminate barriers to a more inclusive media landscape.

After that we will consider Congressman Butterfield's "Expanding Broadcast Ownership Opportunities Act," of which I'm a cosponsor. This legislation would re-establish a tax credit at the FCC for the sale of stations that increase or preserve the ownership of broadcast stations by socially disadvantaged individuals.

While I believe that much needs to be done to address our nation's shortfalls, I commend my good friend for his hard work and diligence on this issue.

After that we will consider Congressman Veasy and Long's "Media Diversity Act."

We will then consider Congresswoman Clarke's "Enhancing Broadcaster Diversity Data Act." This bill will require the FCC to complete its rulemaking regarding the collection of equal opportunity information regarding the workforce and ownership of broadcast stations and cable systems. The FCC would also be required to report this data to the public.

Finally, we will consider the C-Band Act which I introduced with my good friend Doris Matsui as well and Congressmen Johnson and Gianforte. We are still working on this legislation, and I appreciate the support of our cosponsors as well as the continued cooperation and effort from Ranking Member Walden and the minority staff.

The C-Band represents what will likely be the last best opportunity for Congress and this Committee to fund essential priorities that we have discussed as long as I have been on it – namely rural broadband deployment, closing the digital divide, and enhancing our nation's public safety communications systems.

While I believe it is essential that we move to make mid-band spectrum available for 5G, we need to ensure that this auction benefits all Americans.

I want to thank our colleagues on the other side of the aisle and their staffs for the work they have done to get these bills to this point and hope that we can continue to work together on this legislation as we move forward to the full committee. I support the legislation before the subcommittee today and urge my colleagues to do the same.

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