

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

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MEMORANDUM

March 3, 2018

To: Subcommittee on Communications and Technology Democratic Members and Staff
Fr: Committee on Energy and Commerce Democratic Staff
Re: Hearing on “Oversight of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration”

On **Tuesday, March 6, 2018, at 10:00 a.m. in room 2123 of the Rayburn House Office Building**, the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology will hold a hearing titled “Oversight of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration.”

I. BACKGROUND

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is an executive branch agency within the Department of Commerce. The agency is responsible for advising the President on telecommunications, information, and internet policy issues. In addition to its advisory role, NTIA is responsible for many federal telecommunications initiatives, including:

A. Spectrum Management NTIA manages the Federal government’s use of spectrum, and coordinates with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regarding shared spectrum use between federal and nonfederal entities. NTIA announced on February 26, 2018, it has identified in coordination with the Department of Defense (DoD) 100 megahertz of spectrum in the 3450-3550 MHz band for potential repurposing. While the band is reserved primarily for military radar systems at present, NTIA will study the band’s potential to support use by advanced wireless service.

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

C. 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 233 BTOP projects, with two projects remaining in active status. BTOP funding will be available for active grants until 2020, pursuant to the Continuing Resolution Act of 2016.

D. 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. The Administration's Fiscal Year 2018 budget allocates \$50 million for NTIA to revive the National Broadband Map, which was last updated in 2014.

E. BroadbandUSA NTIA created BroadbandUSA to offer technical assistance and informational resources to communities, industry stakeholders, and nonprofits seeking to expand broadband capacity and increase broadband adoption.

F. 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 areas and subjects, including privacy policy, copyright, global free flow of information, cybersecurity, and innovation in the Internet economy.

G. 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.

H. 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.

I. Multi-Stakeholder Processes NTIA 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, NTIA has conducted multi-stakeholder processes on unmanned aerial vehicles, cybersecurity, the Internet of Things, and privacy, among others.

J. Cybersecurity NTIA pursues and develops policies to foster national safety and security, including those pertaining to cybersecurity. In addition to its role as the principal adviser to the President on information and communication policies, including security and privacy policy, NTIA plays a vital role in cybersecurity policy through its convening industry and stakeholder entities to address pressing cybersecurity challenges.

II. NTIA ORGANIZATION AND BUDGET

NTIA is led by the Honorable David Redl, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information, who was confirmed by the Senate on November 11, 2017. The Assistant Secretary is responsible for managing a staff of approximately 160 full-time employees across 11 offices to support agency activities.

NTIA's annualized CR budget for Fiscal Year 2018 was \$31.8 million. For Fiscal Year 2019, NTIA requested \$33.6 million, an increase of approximately \$1.8 million from the previous year.

III. WITNESSES

The Honorable David J. Redl

Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information and Administrator
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce