

**Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery**  
**of**  
**Full Committee Ranking Member Frank Pallone**  
***Markup of Four Bills, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology***  
**March 12, 2024**

Today, the Subcommittee will consider four bills, many of which are bipartisan, to protect Americans and our vital communications networks from foreign adversaries and bad actors.

Our communications networks play an essential role across almost every sector of our economy and touch many parts of Americans' daily lives. Robust networks allow Americans to have easier access to doctors, teachers, and job opportunities. They are also vital to our nations' critical infrastructure, public safety systems, supply chains, and government functions. As technology advances, the role they play will only become greater.

But this growing reach has made our communications networks, and the devices that run on them, targets that face constant threats from amateur hackers and adversarial nations. Fortunately, this Committee has a robust history of protecting America's networks from security threats while also allowing our country to remain a global leader in communications technology.

So, I look forward to continuing this work by advancing the four bills before us today. These bills will protect Americans and our communications networks from threats in our rapidly evolving technological landscape. They also will ensure that the most advanced wireless technologies are designed to be safe and secure.

The bills include H.R. 1513, the FUTURE Networks Act, led by Subcommittee Ranking Member Matsui. This bill will establish a task force at the FCC to study sixth-generation, or 6G, technologies and identify potential supply chain and cybersecurity vulnerabilities. As the next generation of technology is developed, we must understand the potential risks to best protect our networks and strengthen the technology's design.

Finally, as we discuss the importance of securing our communications networks, it's also critical that we continue to ensure all Americans have access to high-speed, reliable, and affordable internet service. Closing the digital divide is essential because broadband is no longer a luxury but a necessity. Internet connectivity is needed so everyone gets a fair chance to connect to the internet and participate in today's economy. Eliminating the gaps will ensure that all communities can grow their economies for the future and will allow us to continue to lead the world in technological innovation.

With the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Committee Democrats made historic investments in programs that will help close the digital divide and connect every American to modern opportunities and prosperity.

Unfortunately, the Affordable Connectivity Program is in danger of running out of funding within the next couple of months. This program has been a game changer – helping more than 23 million

American households, across every state and every Congressional district, bring affordable internet access into their homes. Without Congressional action, these families will lose access to education and economic opportunities, modern health care, and a lot more.

I'm ready to work with my Republican colleagues to pass Representative Clarke's bipartisan Affordable Connectivity Program Extension Act, to extend funding for this program. We must act quickly to pass this legislation so we can keep our constituents and all American families connected.

And with that I yield back the balance of my time.