

**Committee on Energy and Commerce**

**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery  
of**

**Subcommittee on Communications and Technology Member Darren Soto**

***Hearing on “SAT Streamlining Act: Modernizing Satellite Licensing for the Final Frontier”***

**April 21, 2026**

This Committee has a long tradition of working in a bipartisan fashion to enhance technological innovation in this country. And today’s hearing marks the start of another important endeavor as we begin exploring the next frontier of the commercial space industry.

The stakes could not be higher for American space innovation. From the recent Artemis II mission where several space companies partnered with NASA to ensure the crew had a successful mission around the moon to the significant advancements in the ability of satellites to provide broadband and other critical services to American consumers, space is top of mind. While these developments are beneficial for many reasons, advancements in satellite communications are especially helpful to those living in areas where other types of technologies haven’t been built yet due to geographic considerations and other factors.

I expect consumers to rely on satellite technology even more in the years to come as wireless carriers and phone manufacturers continue to add this capability to their networks and devices. Fortunately, with this technology, mobile consumers can rest assured that if they find themselves in an area without service—whether it is because of a lack of coverage, the result of a natural disaster, or some other reason—they will continue to have the ability to reach first responders and loved ones during their time of need. This is especially important as consumers have come to depend upon mobile connectivity to receive emergency alerts with lifesaving information.

This additional layer of protection is a welcome sign given that the climate crisis is causing more frequent and more severe disasters. Resilient communications networks can be the difference between life and death when the unexpected strikes. And satellite systems will be crucial in helping consumers navigate through these challenging moments.

There is no doubt that satellites have an important role to play in keeping Americans safe and secure. So, I am glad that we are considering H.R. 8255, the Satellite and Telecommunications Streamlining (SAT) Act today, a bipartisan bill from Chairman Guthrie and Ranking Member Pallone introduced last week. This legislation would streamline the satellite licensing process at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for certain satellite applications. It responds to the increase in applications for innovative space systems that are being filed at the FCC. To ensure that these systems are built and licensed in the United States, we must have a reasonable and balanced process to evaluate them, and this legislation provides an important framework for achieving this.

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By simplifying the satellite licensing process, the SAT Act will accelerate innovation and strengthen the competitiveness of the United States' satellite industry on the global stage. And this is imperative because other countries, including our foreign adversaries, are making aggressive moves to dominate the industry. In fact, over the last several years, China's presence in space has grown over 600 percent. Quite simply, failing to ensure that the United States remains a market leader in this sector risks our nation falling behind our counterparts across the globe, including China, in producing cutting-edge consumer innovations and fortifying our public safety and national security capabilities.

Therefore, I am glad that we have agreed on bipartisan basis to legislation that will make sure that the American public safely benefits from the space and satellite advancements of today and tomorrow. I also look forward to hearing feedback from today's witnesses and other stakeholders. And we are determined to continue working with Chairman Guthrie and other members of this Committee to make any necessary edits to the SAT Act so that we can ensure the United States leads the rest of world in the satellite communications industry. Time is certainly of the essence.

It is clear we have a lot to discuss this afternoon. I welcome our witnesses and yield back the balance of my time.