

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Greg Walden  
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology  
Hearing on “Equipping Carriers and Agencies in the Wireless Era”  
June 27, 2013**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

I welcome our witnesses as we examine ways to ensure our federal agencies and world-leading wireless industry has the tools they need in the wireless era. I'm convinced we can upgrade federal systems while freeing spectrum, thereby promoting both our nation's safety and economic well-being.

Last year, Congress passed the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act, including the commercial incentive auction provisions that were the fruits of this subcommittee's labor. Such auctions can help make spectrum available to meet the growing demand from mobile broadband services, provided the FCC gets the auction and band plans right.

We cannot afford to rest on our laurels, however. That is why last Congress Ranking Member Eshoo and I created a working group, led by Reps. Guthrie and Matsui that focused on federal spectrum use. Building on the knowledge gained by the working group, today we look at the tools available to maintain and even improve federal agencies capabilities while freeing spectrum for commercial use.

How much would various approaches cost, how much might they raise, and how long would they take to implement? What progress is being made today? What steps might Congress, agencies, and the private sector take to facilitate the process?

One way we can create additional spectrum opportunities is through use of the Commercial Spectrum Enhancement Act. Under the CSEA, commercial providers bear the cost of moving federal incumbents to clear spectrum. This approach has been successful in the past but is not without limitations.

Might the principles underlying commercial incentive auctions be applicable here? As we look at the budgetary pressures facing the country, is there a way to somehow share with federal agencies some of the value generated from spectrum they relinquish? Our agencies are facing a shortage of funding. The U.S. wireless industry is facing a shortage of spectrum. If we work together to harness the strengths and assets of our agencies and the private sector we can meet the needs of government, advance our leadership in the mobile wireless world, and create jobs in the process. I thank the witnesses for their testimony and look forward to their counsel.

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