

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Greg Walden  
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology  
Markup of the FCC Consolidated Reporting Act  
February 4, 2015**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

We are here today to mark up the FCC Consolidated Reporting Act, a bill that has passed this committee and the House twice in the last two Congresses. The bill consolidates eight discrete reports into one thorough and holistic review of the communications marketplace, with the aim of giving a more accurate view of the advancements and challenges in the fast moving and innovative communications and technology sector. It also reduces the burden on the FCC by eliminating outdated and unnecessary reports. As with so many other products of this subcommittee in the past, this legislation takes into account changes recommended by the minority.

Our subcommittee will continue to do our work, large and small, in as thoughtful and bipartisan manner as possible. When we work together, we produce good work for the country. The most recent example of the outcome of our efforts is the successful AWS-3 auction which produced proceeds of nearly \$45 billion, fully paying for the public safety, interoperable broadband network, enhanced 911 services and will likely provide \$20 billion toward paying down the nation's debt. And it will create thousands of new, good paying jobs as new technology is invented and new devices are created. Recently, Chairman Wheeler and I applauded the various federal partners who, with regular interaction from our committee, came together to make this happen. Regrettably, Tom and I forgot to also commend the broadcast community for their part in making that auction successful. We appreciate the role broadcasters played and look forward to the positive role I know they can play in making the next auction an even bigger success.

With that being said, let me address the elephant in the room: net neutrality. I would like to again invite my Democratic colleagues to work with me, with Chairman Upton, and with the committee majority to produce a durable net neutrality bill that will avoid the protracted the litigation that is sure to follow Chairman Wheeler's heavy-handed regulatory take over of the Internet.

Strangely, the American people have no way of knowing precisely what the FCC will vote on and neither do any of you until the Commission takes their final vote. And perhaps not even then—the FCC took ten months to release the text last time it voted on net neutrality. Last month Chairman Upton, Chairman Thune and I called on Chairman Wheeler to make available the draft order prior to the vote, so that Congress, industry, and most importantly, the four million plus interested public commenters, can know what the commission intends to do.

The chairman rejected our request for transparency wrapping himself in old-school, Washington regulatory mumbo jumbo. This is not how it should be done, and in many states, public utility commissions operate far more in the open when they conduct the people's business. This is yet another example of how broken things are in Washington.

Why keep the draft order secret? If the Chairman is willing to brief Members of Congress, our staffs, the White House, and who knows who else about all the key points, why not share the language he's written to accomplish his goals? What's there to hide? We posted our draft language for all to see, and the feedback we got is helpful.

Folks, we're talking about the future of the Internet here. Likely just three Commissioners at the FCC are about to decide the Internet's future behind closed doors for no one to see, until long after the decisions are made. That's no way to conduct the people's business.

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