

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 3, 2021

Ms. Evelyn Remaley  
Acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information  
National Telecommunications and Information Administration  
Herbert C. Hoover Building  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Ave, N.W. Washington, DC 20230

Dear Acting Assistant Secretary Remaley,

As the United States continues to engage in the race to 5G and beyond, it is imperative that the Federal government make an urgent and concerted effort to keep pace with our global peers by freeing up additional mid-band spectrum. Without a reliable pipeline of this valuable resource, the U.S. risks ceding ground to other countries making rapid advances in the development and deployment of next generation wireless networks. We want to thank the Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and Department of Defense (DoD) for their critical work to reallocate the 3.45-3.55 GHz (“3.45 GHz”) band from Federal to commercial use and urge NTIA to build on these efforts by taking additional steps to facilitate a timely and successful rollout of this urgently needed spectrum.

Congress recently enacted legislation requiring the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to commence an auction for licenses in all or a portion of the 3.45 GHz band not later than December 31, 2021. The FCC has further proposed procedures including an October 2021 auction start date. To ensure this deadline is met and that the auction is as successful as possible, NTIA must continue to exercise its role as manager of the federal government's use of spectrum through additional coordination and information sharing with federal and non-federal parties.

To protect sensitive DoD operations in the 3.45 GHz band, Cooperative Planning Areas (CPAs) and Periodic Use Areas (PUAs) will be employed. In August 2020, America’s Mid-Band Initiative Team estimated that approximately seven percent of the U.S. population would be impacted by these interference mitigation protocols, but this estimate has since been revised upward. While protecting DoD operations with national security implications must be our top priority, it is also crucial that potential bidders have timely and accurate information about the extent of DoD operations that will remain in the band, the interference protection requirements needed to maintain them, the interference effects from them, and a process for communicating this information to prospective bidders.

Without prompt and detailed information about the coordination framework and transition plans, prospective bidders will be unable to make informed decisions about their participation in the auction. This uncertainty could limit participation and ultimately the amount of revenue raised by the auction. With an ongoing need for funding to close America's digital divide, it is critical that NTIA use its full authority to promote a successful auction. Specifically, as Co-Chairs of the Congressional Spectrum Caucus, we urge you to hold public workshops with a "trusted agent" process to determine what information is needed in the workbook, provide the transition plan in advance of the statutory deadline, and establish a formalized process with DoD to distribute this information to the public. These steps will provide insight into the 3.45 GHz band and promote broad participation in the auction.

To discuss implementation of these recommendations and broader federal coordination efforts in the 3.45 GHz band, we request a staff briefing at your earliest convenience. We look forward to supporting NTIA as it prepares this import mid-band spectrum for auction.

Sincerely,



Doris Matsui  
Member of Congress



Brett Guthrie  
Member of Congress