

June 11, 2018

The Honorable Cory Gardner
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maggie Hassan
United States Senate
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Senator Gardner and Senator Hassan,

On behalf of a diverse group of public advocates, educational organizations, taxpayer organizations and associations, we write to express our support for S. 1682, the Advancing Innovation and Reinvigorating Widespread Access to Viable Electromagnetic Spectrum (AIRWAVES) Act.

This bipartisan legislation is critical for the United States to produce a pipeline of spectrum necessary to reap the benefits that next-generation 5G wireless networks and new opportunities for unlicensed services will generate for U.S. consumers, innovation and economic growth. The AIRWAVES Act will also help close the digital divide by setting aside 10% of proceeds from the auctions required by the Act to build out wireless in unserved and often rural areas. This will help close the digital divide without using taxpayer dollars.

Winning the Global Race to 5G. Undeniably, there is a global race for 5G leadership and superiority. According to a new report from Analysis Mason, a telecommunications research firm, the U.S. is currently behind China and South Korea in the race for 5G deployment. These countries are aggressively making spectrum available for 5G. The AIRWAVES Act provides the certainty necessary for the U.S. to reclaim global wireless leadership by establishing clear auction deadlines for substantial amounts of low-, mid- and high-band spectrum.

Freeing Up Licensed and Unlicensed Spectrum for Commercial Use. The AIRWAVES Act provides a pipeline to make available both licensed and unlicensed spectrum necessary for next generation services. Without a healthy infusion of both exclusive use licensed spectrum and shared use unlicensed spectrum into the private sector on a predictable schedule, industry cannot adequately plan capital investment to support 5G services and devices.

Driving Economic Growth and Innovation. The wireless industry is poised to invest \$275 billion to build out 5G networks, generating \$500 billion in economic growth and 3 million new jobs. Not only will 5G networks transform our economy, but 5G networks will also prompt significant innovation and advancements for every sector including consumer tech, transportation, energy, agriculture, and healthcare. The AIRWAVES Act will help make that investment and future innovations a reality by providing a predictable supply of licensed and unlicensed spectrum. We need to ensure that leadership of the industries of the future and tomorrow's advancements in health care, transportation, energy are not exported overseas by ceding 5G innovation to other countries.

Helping Rural Communities. The AIRWAVES Act recognizes the importance of ensuring that all Americans, including those in rural areas, are connected. That's why the Act will fund the deployment of wireless broadband services in unserved and underserved areas through a set-aside of spectrum auction proceeds without taxpayer dollars. If this set-aside had been in place, the previous two spectrum auctions alone would have resulted in a rural broadband investment of more than \$6 billion dollars—an amount more than the FCC's Mobility Fund will make available over the course of a decade.

The AIRWAVES Act will help ensure the U.S. leads the world in 5G, spur economic growth in industries of the future, and help rural communities. Thank you for your bipartisan leadership and we look forward to working with you to advance and pass this important bill.

Sincerely,

