



Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515

Peter A. DeFazio
Chairman

Katherine W. Dedrick
Staff Director

Sam Graves
Ranking Member

Paul J. Sass
Republican Staff Director

April 10, 2020

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Madam Secretary:

Global Positioning System (GPS) signals are essential for the proper functioning of every mode of transportation and sixteen different sectors of critical infrastructure. Without access to GPS signals, every mode slows down, carries less capacity, and is more subject to accidents. For these reasons, Congress passed the National Timing Resilience and Security Act of 2018 to ensure the establishment of a reliable back-up signal should GPS signals become degraded or compromised.

As your Department is the lead Federal agency for civil Position, Navigation and Timing (PNT) requirements, including the development, acquisition, management and operations of civilian GPS applications, we remain optimistic that you will expeditiously fulfill this statutory obligation. We are writing to you now, however, to express our strong concerns about a decision pending at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) which could jeopardize not only the development of a back-up signal to GPS, but GPS itself.

For many years, Ligado Networks – an American satellite communications company formerly known as LightSquared – has had an application before the FCC to operate in a way that government studies have shown will interfere with GPS signals for many users. We understand that the FCC may be close to making a decision in this matter. We are concerned that not all relevant information on this issue within your Department has been made available to Congress, the public or the FCC. We would appreciate your cooperation in providing to the Committee copies of the following items generated within the last 12 months that have touched on this issue, including:

- Correspondence between your Department and other departments and agencies, especially:
 - The National Telecommunication Information Agency (NTIA)

- Federal Communications Commission
- Department of Defense
- National Economic Council, and
- Department of Commerce, specifically the National Institute of Standards and Technology;
- Studies and analyses by the Inter-Department Radio Advisory Committee in response to FCC Chairman Pai's request for information on this issue, regardless of its state of formal approval; and
- Correspondence signed by multiple agencies and/or departments, regardless of whether it has been transmitted formally to the FCC.

Considering the fact that the FCC may act on this matter at any moment without further input from the Congress or the public, and further considering the serious implications for damage to the reliability of GPS signals, we would appreciate your office providing this information to the Committee by the close of business on Wednesday, April 15, 2020.

Please deliver one set of these records to the Majority Staff in Room 2165 of the Rayburn House Office Building and one set of records to the Minority Staff in Room 2164 of the Rayburn House Office Building. Any questions regarding this request should be directed to David Jansen, Staff Director, Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation at 202-226-3260 or dave.jansen@mail.house.gov.

We are sure you share our concerns about the need to protect GPS and we look forward to your prompt reply. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Peter A. DeFazio
Chairman
Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure



John Garamendi
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure