

**Opening Statement**  
**The Honorable Ralph Hall (R-TX), Chairman**  
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology  
*Impacts of the LightSquared Network on Federal Science Activities*

September 8, 2011

Good afternoon. Welcome to today's hearing titled "*Impacts of the LightSquared Network on Federal Science Activities.*" The United States is the clear leader in precision, navigation, and timing because of its consistent investment in the Global Positioning System. This investment has been protected and reaffirmed by successive Administrations' support, which has led to one of the greatest technological achievements this nation has ever created. It is one that both government and industry can be proud of and is the gold standard for billions of people around the world. While it is nearly impossible to quantify the exact impact GPS has had on society, it has certainly had an enormous impact on economic productivity, furthered scientific understanding, and modernized our national defense. Some recent reports estimate GPS enables over \$3 trillion in direct and indirect economic activity and has created over three million jobs – a fact that should not be overlooked with the President preparing to speak before Congress in a few short hours on the state of our economy.

In addition to its economic significance, the Global Positioning System is also an important aspect of many federal operations and scientific activities. Aerial and satellite imagery, weather forecasting, climate observation, search and rescue, air traffic management, rail transportation, traffic management, vessel navigation, emergency response and mapping, time distribution, seismic monitoring, land surveys, resource management, agriculture, engineering and scientific observations all depend upon GPS. Any potential disruption to GPS, and the science activities that it supports, is of utmost concern to this Committee.

LightSquared has proposed a network to support the President's challenge to identify 500 megahertz of new spectrum for broadband service. While the President's goal is certainly commendable, it should not be accomplished by destroying existing systems and applications. As the President's own National Space Policy states, the United States must "maintain its leadership in the service, provision, and use of global navigation satellite systems (GNSS)," and "[i]nvest in domestic capabilities and support international activities to detect, mitigate, and increase resiliency to harmful interference to GPS"

The purpose of this hearing is to examine the potential impact of the LightSquared network on Federal science activities. In doing so, we hope to ensure that all of the affected agencies are aware of the potential issues, have communicated those concerns effectively, are identifying potential mitigation strategies, and are calculating the costs associated with those mitigation strategies. In preparing for this hearing, we have seen varying degrees of preparation by agencies. Some have done the expected due diligence and some clearly have not.

Although the FCC has stated that it will not allow LightSquared to begin commercial service without first resolving the interference issue, nothing actually prevents the FCC from moving forward at this point. Since the testing that was conducted this spring and summer, LightSquared

has put forth a modified plan. Unfortunately, no testing has been done on this modified plan. I agree with the agencies before us today that additional testing should be required before the FCC allows LightSquared to begin commercial service.

Ensuring that GPS is protected is a vital national interest. Its economic impact is clear, and its utility to science is unquestionable, but what is also important is the real impact on lives. Last month the FAA announced that LightSquared's previous proposal would result in billions of dollars of investment lost, a decade of delays to ongoing projects, a cost impact of roughly \$72 billion, and almost 800 additional fatalities – and that is just one Administration. Compromises to GPS would also benefit foreign systems and threaten U.S. leadership. As we have recently seen, dependence on Russia for access to the International Space Station has already compromised U.S. interests. Reliance on Russia's GLONASS system, China's COMPASS system, or Europe's GALILEO system for precision, navigation, and timing would be just as costly.

We have to find a way to open up more spectrum for broadband, but not at the expense of GPS. This is, however, a two way street. GPS users and agencies also have to be mindful that developing applications outside of their spectrum is dangerous and ripe for conflict, even though previous there were no problems.

With that, I yield to the Ranking Member from Texas, Ms. Johnson.

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