



STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD PROVIDED BY THE AEROSPACE INDUSTRIES  
ASSOCIATION TO THE HOUSE SCIENCE, SPACE AND TECHNOLOGY  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT  
MAY 16, 2019

The Aerospace Industries Association (AIA) appreciates the opportunity to submit our position on the importance of the future of our nation’s weather enterprise. AIA also thanks the House Science, Space and Technology Committee Subcommittee on the Environment for holding today’s hearing, “The Future of Forecasting: Building a Stronger U.S. Weather Enterprise.” We are pleased to see that this Committee is prioritizing weather and comes at a time when the future of accurate weather forecasts faces uncertainty moving forward.

AIA is the voice of the American aerospace and defense industry. AIA represents nearly 340 leading aerospace and defense manufacturers and suppliers, supporting 2.4 million jobs and over \$800 billion in annual exports. Our members and companies like them build the satellites used by the federal government to ensure that weather forecasts are accurate and available in real time.

The average American takes accurate weather readings for granted. You can be almost anywhere in the world and look at your phone to receive accurate weather data. The federal government also relies heavily on these readings. Natural disaster situations like Hurricane Sandy prove that accurate weather readings help with disaster preparedness and recovery efforts.<sup>1</sup> Interference-free radiofrequency spectrum communications that allow for accurate readings make these applications possible.

Unfortunately, today’s spectrum reality could directly impact the future of accurate weather readings. Spectrum is a finite resource and as the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) looks to free up spectrum for emerging technologies like 5G, the risk of interference with existing users rises, in both the incumbent band and the adjacent bands.

This risk has come into the spotlight recently as a result of the FCC’s 24 GHz auction plan. While it was a multi-year process to get to the auction itself, it is unclear if the proper testing to ensure that harmful interference with weather equipment in the directly adjacent band would not take place had been conducted fully. As NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine and U.S. Department of Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross highlighted in their letter to FCC Chairman Ajit Pai on February 28, 2019:

“[this] would have a significant negative impact on the transmission of critical Earth science data — an American taxpayer investment spanning decades and billions of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://spacenews.com/5g-trumps-weather-in-spectrum-debate/>

dollars with data supporting public safety, natural disaster and weather forecasting... As the U.S. government continues to investigate additional spectrum for future commercial broadband use, it is essential that protections are established for the critical operations of NASA, the Department of Commerce and our international partners in the 23.6 to 24 GHz spectrum band.”

AIA and our members are excited about the promise of new technologies like 5G, but believe it is critical that the proper testing takes place prior to any FCC auction, to protect the existing users of both the specific and adjacent spectrum bands. This will allow spectrum band sharing to take place where appropriate and allow for existing services to continue without harm if the risk of interference is too great.

We thank the Subcommittee for holding this hearing and bringing attention to this critical matter and look forward to working with both Congress and the regulatory bodies to ensure that 5G can be rolled out in both a timely and safe manner for all spectrum users.