

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 22, 2011

Mr. Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

In January 2011, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) granted a conditional authorization to LightSquared Subsidiary, LLC to operate a terrestrial broadband network in the Mobile Satellite Service band of radio spectrum. This controversial authorization has drawn opposition from federal agencies, the United Nations' International Civil Aviation Organization, and a host of stakeholders representing various users of the Global Positioning System (GPS). The opposition is based on concerns that LightSquared's operations would disrupt GPS services critical to various missions. Recently, we have seen LightSquared begin to point the finger at current spectrum users as the source of problems, and its once cooperative tone has deteriorated.

Perhaps the most interesting of the claims is that the GPS community is the beneficiary of undue government help. In fact, the opposite appears to be true. In our decades of public service, we have never seen the entire federal government and so many private companies directed to expend such considerable financial resources and man hours to accommodate a single company's desires. Never have we seen a company's business model threaten critical transportation safety infrastructure and yet be assisted by its federal regulator. It is odd that the FCC has pegged the hopes of expanding broadband access on such a controversial proposal by a single applicant.

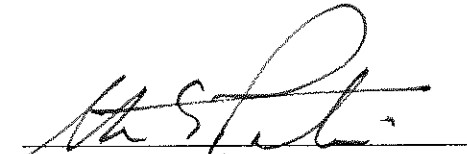
LightSquared claimed that GPS manufacturers have ignored government standards in the development of receivers. However, it is our understanding that no statute or law governs the standards by which receivers are built. In fact, the flexibility of receiver design has bred innovation in the development of revolutionary technologies serving a host of different purposes and communities. Advancements in precision GPS receivers have revolutionized transportation navigation and safety, farming, and hurricane forecasting, and have played a key role in the defense of our nation. These applications serve billions of users and the overall public good. The open design of GPS and the historical protection of relevant spectrum have bred the development of countless benefits for the public derived from a finite and, in fact, small portion of radio spectrum.

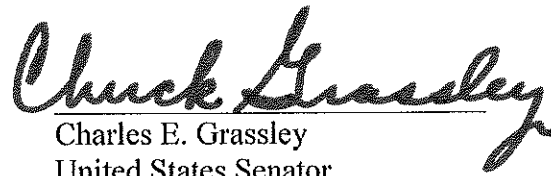
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Your January 2011 authorization was conditional on LightSquared successfully resolving interference issues. We urge you to resist political pressures to grant LightSquared an authorization that could jeopardize the Nation's unique spectrum resource – GPS. The U.S. Department of Transportation has estimated the potential cost of GPS disruption in civil aviation to be \$100 billion, and more importantly, almost 800 aviation fatalities.

While we understand the challenges associated with expanding broadband access, we urge the Commission to bear in mind the unique and ever expanding public benefit provided by GPS, and to take appropriate measures to protect it. We look forward to working with you to avoid introducing any hazard to safe flight and to avoid the many other impacts that approval of this application may have on so many sectors of our economy.

Sincerely,


Thomas E. Petri
Chairman
Subcommittee on Aviation
Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure


Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary