



March 17, 2026

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chair
Committee on Commerce, Science, Transportation
United States Senate

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate

The Honorable Deb Fischer
Chair
Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Media
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate

The Honorable Ben Ray Luján
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Media
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate

Re: Hearing on U.S. Leadership at the World Radiocommunication Conference 2027 (WRC-27): Strategy and Challenges Ahead of Shanghai

Dear Committee Chair Cruz, Ranking Member Cantwell, Subcommittee Chair Fischer, Ranking Member Luján, and Members of the Subcommittee:

Decisions made at the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) shape the global market for a wide range of communications technologies, from satellite services to Wi-Fi to commercial mobile services. Ensuring that the marketplace remains flexible and open to innovation will require a whole-of-government approach, as well as consistent engagement with both industry and our international partners and allies. In support of that engagement, NCTA recommends that Congress and the Administration (1) prioritize WRC-27 advocacy that reinforces U.S. technological leadership and captures all aspects of our telecommunications marketplace, (2) invest in robust public- and private-sector participation in the WRC-27 preparation process, and (3) work to ensure the conditions necessary for full and secure stakeholder participation in Shanghai.

A well-coordinated campaign to promote U.S. priorities has never been more important. Other nations, particularly the People’s Republic of China, are investing significantly in attempts to dominate international standards, proliferate untrustworthy technologies, and lock U.S. companies out of key international markets. Sustained and robust U.S. engagement will help ensure that international spectrum policies reflect principles of open markets, free speech, technical rigor, and innovation-driven growth—not authoritarian values. That engagement should be focused on three pillars.

First, Congress and the Administration should prioritize efforts that maximize our nation’s leadership and competitive advantage, especially with regard to unlicensed and shared spectrum technologies. For decades, Americans have benefited from a spectrum policy framework that encourages innovation, promotes investment, and supports an “all of the above” wireless ecosystem. That environment has helped make shared and unlicensed spectrum critical economic drivers and consistent sources of U.S. wireless leadership and competitive advantage. Much of the technology ecosystem supporting Wi-Fi and related platforms—including chipsets, networking equipment, software, and services—has been developed by American companies and continues to support high-skilled jobs, research, and manufacturing in the United States. Wi-Fi, in turn, supports a large and growing U.S. innovation ecosystem that drives investment, high-skilled employment, and global leadership in networking equipment, semiconductor design, and connectivity services. As NTIA Administrator Arielle Roth put it, when it comes to unlicensed technologies, “[n]o one does it better,” than the United States, “and the world knows it.”

Second, NCTA recommends that Administration leaders promote sustained participation by U.S. government and private-sector experts to ensure that the conference's decisions are informed by the experience of the world's most dynamic communications ecosystem. NCTA recognizes that WRC preparation is a multi-year process that, when done right, requires significant investments of time and resources. Making that long-term commitment may be particularly challenging when Congress, under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, has also charged the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) with strict timeline benchmarks for allocating our nation's spectrum airwaves. Congress can support this work by stating clearly that investments in WRC preparation support a wide range of priorities for the economy, national security, and innovation.

Third, NCTA urges the Administration to help remove obstacles to broad public- and private-sector participation in Shanghai. The U.S. approach is strengthened by our nation's commitment to a transparent, collaborative partnership between the public and private sectors. Alongside government experts, participation by American private-sector leaders has consistently advanced technically sound and forward-looking proposals that reflect the cutting edge of technology. Industry partners also help government negotiators fully understand the commercial consequences of each proposal and serve as force multipliers in formal negotiations and informal engagements around the world. A significant American presence at preparatory events and on the ground at WRC-27 is essential.

Without careful planning, the location of the conference in Shanghai could deter some stakeholders from undertaking this important work. Potential participants have raised concerns about data security, safety, privacy, and rule-of-law protections. The U.S. government can promote participation by encouraging the International Telecommunication Union to ensure the host country offers protections and conditions consistent with international norms. These should include guarantees of timely entry and exit for registered delegates; access to consular services; secure communications capabilities at the conference site, including reliable encrypted Wi-Fi connectivity; appropriate privacy safeguards in meeting spaces and lodgings; and assurances that all registered participants may freely conduct official conference business consistent with the rules of the conference.

In short, maintaining leadership at WRC-27 will help ensure that international spectrum frameworks continue to support innovation, investment, and the development of advanced communications technologies that benefit consumers and businesses both domestically and around the world.

We thank you for your leadership on this issue and for holding such an important hearing regarding America's continued emphasis of our technology and innovation on the global stage. Our nation faces a critical moment in Shanghai in 2027. Your attention to the upcoming conference will further drive key stakeholder involvement in the process, helping the U.S. meet this pivotal moment in the global competition for technology leadership.

Respectfully,



Hon. Cory Gardner
President and CEO
NCTA – The Internet & Television Association