

The Honorable Ted Cruz
167 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Peter Welch
115 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

February 10, 2026

Dear Chairman Cruz and Senator Welch,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing tens of thousands in the weather, water, Earth science and the many related scientific, engineering and operational communities, we are writing to express concern over certain provisions of the Satellite and Telecommunications Streamlining Act. While we share the legislation's goals of boosting U.S. space leadership and serving underserved communities, we're concerned that the bill, and specifically its "deemed granted" provision, will significantly degrade weather forecasts, critical for public safety, our economy, and our national security.

Our communities are concerned about the cumulative impacts of satellite mega-constellations on weather forecasting. Accurate weather forecasts are fundamental to our nation's economy—studies have estimated that adverse weather events currently have an annual direct economic impact of approximately \$1 trillion, while indirect impacts on weather-impacted industries are far greater.¹ Passive microwave sensors on existing and future environmental satellites provide data essential to the accuracy of weather forecasting—from hurricane track prediction to forecasting major tornado outbreaks to major flooding. But these sensors are facing increased threats of radio frequency interference from large constellations operating at frequencies adjacent to those allocated for atmospheric sensing applications, likely making that weather and science data unreliable, corrupted, and of limited use. The laws of physics dictate these allocations, thereby limiting options to adjust them as is done for telecommunications services.

If environmental satellite measurements are not collected due to interference, the effect of that loss not only degrades weather forecasts today but also damages climate information well into the future. The Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) recent decision to expand SpaceX's authorization to 15,000 satellites—with reliance on voluntary coordination rather than enforceable protections—already reflects inadequate attention to adjacent band interference that threatens passive sensing of weather.

The Satellite and Telecommunications Streamlining Act would make this situation even worse because its provisions presume approval of these sorts of mega-constellations in a short timeframe, forcing automatic license approvals before the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and the scientific community can complete reasonable and meaningful interference assessments. Since the FCC is generally dependent

¹ Lazo et al. U.S. economic sensitivity to weather variability. *Bull. Amer. Meteor. Soc.*, 92, 709-720. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1175/2011BAMS2928.1>.

on other agencies and outside technical expertise to understand the requirements of scientific research and operations, bypassing these external engineering and scientific assessments will impair necessary data collection.

There are numerous forthcoming, newly filed, pending, and approved satellite broadband license applications related to these mega-constellations that are moving through the FCC each week, and they present a serious risk to accurate and timely weather forecasting. Under this legislation, an unprecedented number of new satellites could be “deemed approved” on an arbitrary timeline, likely causing considerable interference that will degrade forecasts for severe weather like tornadoes and hurricanes.

The undersigned organizations are also concerned about the precedent this legislation sets for future FCC decision-making and the potential for “deemed granted” approaches to be used for other license types that require scientific and technical review. Such arbitrary time limits could lead the FCC to make decisions (both approving and disapproving) in the future that would harm American prosperity, safety and national security.

The government and commercial satellites that compose the U.S. weather, water, and climate forecasting enterprise are the result of billions of dollars of taxpayer investments that protect lives and property during disasters, help businesses prosper, and inform military decision-making. We urge you to revise the Satellite and Telecommunications Streamlining Act, and specifically its “deemed granted” provision, to continue to serve the public both in boosting US space leadership and in protecting public safety, our economy, and our national security.

Regards,

Lexi Shultz
VP, Science Policy & Government Relations
American Geophysical Union

Brian Papa
Acting Executive Director
American Meteorological Society

Janice Bunting
Chief Executive Officer
National Weather Association

Beau Backus
Chair, Frequency Allocation in Remote
Sensing Technical Committee
IEEE Geoscience & Remote Sensing Society