

Testimony of Alan Davidson
Nominee to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information and
Administrator, National Telecommunications and Information Administration
Before the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
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Thank you Chair Cantwell, Ranking Member Wicker, and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to speak with you today.

I am honored to be President Biden's nominee for Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator at this historic time for the agency and this historic moment in its work to connect all Americans. Thank you to Secretary Raimondo as well for her support of my nomination.

I would also like to thank my wife, Melissa, who is here today. We are joined by our children Amelia and Harry. They are a consistent reminder to me of the importance of this work.

When I was a bright-eyed computer science student at MIT, few of us would have imagined the digital world of today. The Web did not exist. The Internet was mostly a non-profit network of universities. Mobile phones were the size of bricks. But even then we had a strong sense that computers and communications networks were changing the world. And we had questions about their impact. Would these technologies connect us or divide us? Would they concentrate power, or provide opportunity to all?

Fast forward to today. The Internet did, in fact, change everything. Modern networks created a digital revolution, and are now essential to how we work, live, and innovate. But those questions about technology remain, and they have been the animating force of my work.

I have spent my career devoted to the idea that technology must serve human progress. For 25 years, as a computer scientist, a lawyer, a public interest leader, and an executive, I have sought to build and shape digital technologies that connect people and make their lives better.

In these roles, I have had a chance to lead organizations, manage high-performing teams, and build coalitions in pursuit of a positive vision of the future.

It is a continuing sense of purpose that brings me here today. I believe we have been given a historic opportunity – thanks to bipartisan support from Congress – to connect the unconnected, close the digital divide, and power American jobs and competitiveness.

If confirmed, I will focus on three top priorities:

The first is **closing the digital divide**. The Internet is now a critical part of American life. As the pandemic made clear, people need broadband to work, to learn, and to connect. Yet far too many American households are still without affordable, high-speed Internet. Congressional

infrastructure funding has created a once-in-a-generation opportunity to close the digital divide and connect all Americans. This will be my top priority in the coming years.

My second priority will be **ensuring access to spectrum**. NTIA serves a critical role in ensuring the most effective and efficient use of this scarce resource. That includes meeting the needs of federal users while also supporting advanced wireless technologies to realize the promise of next generation services and connected devices. If confirmed, I will work towards a coordinated, national approach to spectrum use and planning – in order to meet the demand for spectrum now and in the future.

Third, NTIA has an important part to play in **building a better Internet**. NTIA has a statutory role in efforts to bolster cybersecurity, protect privacy, and advocate for America's vision of free and open communications around the world. For over three decades the Internet has been a positive force offering access to information, connection with community, and economic opportunity. But today's Internet also faces security risks, eroding privacy and threats from authoritarian regimes. We can and must do better.

These are ambitious goals. Because of technology's growing role in our lives, these priorities are about far more than communications policy. They are about creating new jobs for Americans. They are about maintaining America's global leadership in technology. They are about competing better on the global stage – and improving equity here at home.

If confirmed, I will continue to do what I've done for my entire career since leaving MIT: build networks and technology with intention, with responsibility, and with the ultimate goal of improving lives.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to your questions.