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United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125
WEBSITE: <https://commerce.senate.gov>

June 16, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Thune:

I am opposing the pending nomination of Olivia Trusty to serve as a Commissioner on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and will be urging my colleagues to do the same. Although I respect the nominee's professional background, when I spoke in support of Ms. Trusty's nomination in Committee on April 30, I explained that my support was not absolute. Since then, the Trump Administration has pursued a series of concerning policies, leading me to oppose Ms. Trusty's nomination.

As you know, I had hoped Ms. Trusty's nomination would be paired with a Democratic nominee, consistent with longstanding practice. But her nomination is being brought to the floor this week while an open Democratic seat on the Commission remains vacant following former Commissioner Geoffrey Starks's resignation. Moreover, given President Trump's alarming record of seeking to illegally fire Democrats on independent commissions like the FCC, I remain seriously concerned that this Administration will try to illegally terminate Democratic Commissioner Anna Gomez, refuse to nominate any Democratic replacements, and then operate the Commission on a strictly partisan basis.

Since Ms. Trusty's confirmation hearing, troubling developments in the reconciliation process have also reinforced my policy concerns about restoring a Republican majority on the Commission. The Senate Commerce Committee and its counterpart in the House have released plans for the FCC to auction vast amounts of spectrum currently used for national security, aviation safety, and next generation connectivity. This reckless approach to spectrum management threatens essential systems that protect American lives. We have seen this playbook before with disastrous results: During the first Trump Administration, rushed and poorly planned spectrum auctions jeopardized safety in our airspace, undermined strategic defense systems, and diminished weather forecasting capabilities. Now, as Senate Republicans and this Administration prepare to repeat these dangerous mistakes by directing the FCC to auction spectrum bands that support critical technologies, we face the renewed prospect of compromising essential tools that protect Americans every day.

For these reasons, I must oppose Ms. Trusty's nomination and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maria Cantwell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Maria" and last name "Cantwell" clearly distinguishable.

Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member