



**U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE, SCIENCE & TRANSPORTATION**
Senator Maria Cantwell, Chair

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Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Nominations Executive Session
July 12, 2023

Opening Statement

[VIDEO](#)

Good morning. The Commerce Committee is in Executive Session today to advance four nominations to the Federal Communications Commission, a nomination to the National Transportation Safety Board, and a critical list of promotions for the U.S. Coast Guard.

The FCC impacts nearly every part of our lives and domestic economy.

Whether the agency is focused on improving wireless communications, ensuring robust broadband deployment, reviewing the media marketplace or protecting the nation from foreign threats. The FCC's oversight ensures that today's hyper-connected environment works for consumers.

The impact of the FCC is obvious in my state. The FCC's broadband maps will direct where Bipartisan Infrastructure investments in broadband will be spent.

And, in my opinion, more needs to be done on our broadband mapping.

Based on the latest version of the FCC broadband maps, the State of Washington received \$1.2 billion in federal funding.

Constituents in my state continue to work hard so that the FCC data is improved with accuracy.

These are some of the important reasons why considering the FCC nominees:

- Anna Gomez, nominee for the FCC Commissioner;
- Geoffrey Starks, who has been re-nominated for FCC Commissioner;
- Brendan Carr, who has been re-nominated for FCC Commissioner; and
- Fara Damelin, nominee for FCC Inspector General.

Ms. Gomez is a dedicated public servant with 25 years of experience in the telecommunications industry. If confirmed, she will be the first Latina on the Commission in more than 20 years.

Ms. Gomez has demonstrated she has the experience and judgment to be highly effective in this role as commissioner and has earned bipartisan support for her nomination.

Next, we will consider the re-nomination of Geoffrey Starks.

Senator Moran introduced Commissioner Starks at his nomination hearing by noting that Commissioner Stark's most important characteristic was that he was a fellow Kansan. And went on to say that he received much support because of many bipartisan telecommunications issues, broadband access and network security.

I agree with Senator Moran's assessment.

Next, we will consider the re-nomination of Brendan Carr.

He has been a Commissioner since 2017 and leads the Connected Care Pilot Program to support the delivery of high-quality telehealth to low-income Americans and veterans. Commissioner Carr has pledged to be bipartisan in his role and to treat every entity that has a matter before the FCC in a manner that is fair, just and impartial.

Finally, we will consider the nomination of Fara Damelin to be FCC Inspector General.

Ms. Damelin has dedicated 27 years to public service, including nine years within the Inspector General community. Through this experience, she has the tools and experience needed to strengthen the FCC's programs and operations and make sure the FCC programs are effective and efficient.

We also turn to the nomination of Alvin Brown to be a member of the National Transportation Safety Board.

I was pleased to see our colleague and former member of this Committee, Senator Scott of Florida, join at the hearing on Mr. Brown's nomination and speak to support of his nomination.

The NTSB Board needs hard-working and dedicated individuals who put safety as their top priority and I believe that Mayor Brown will do so on behalf of the American people.

Finally, we will consider a number of promotions in the U.S. Coast Guard.

I turn to Ranking Member Cruz for his opening statement.