

Neall Weber
December 7, 2011
House Public Utilities
HCR 27

Good morning, Chairman Stautberg, ranking member DeGeeter, and members of the House Public Utilities Committee. My name is Neall Weber. I am a farmer in western Franklin County. We farm approximately 2200 acres of grain and hay on our farm. Thank you for this opportunity to testify as a proponent of House Concurrent Resolution 27.

Agriculture is Ohio's number one industry, employing one in seven Ohioans and contributing \$107 billion to our economy. Individuals, partnerships, and family corporations own 98 percent of Ohio's farms.

Precision Global Position System (GPS) is an important tool for Ohio farmers. I am not a tech savvy person. However, GPS has increased the productivity on our farm by helping to lower cost and increase productivity.

We use this technology for farm planning, field mapping, soil sampling, tractor guidance, crop scouting, variable rate applications, and yield mapping. GPS allows us to work during low visibility field conditions such as rain, dust, fog, and darkness. More precise application of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers, and better control of the dispersion of those chemicals are possible through precision agriculture, thus reducing expenses, producing a higher yield, and creating a more environmentally friendly farm.

The use of this technology is in jeopardy due to a the conventional waiver that the Federal Communications Commission recently granted to LightSquared, a broadband internet provider, that will enable it to operate high-speed broadband over frequencies normally used by low-powered satellite-based systems, such as GPS.

Although I believe that high-speed broadband services have great potential to bring opportunity to rural Ohioans, I do not think that opportunity should come at the expense of losing GPS. Instead, the FCC should ensure that both LightSquared and GPS have worked out any issues that may affect those currently using GPS.

Thank you again Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for allowing me to be here today in support of this resolution. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.