

# Highlights of Recent Filings in GN Docket No. 18-122



In a Public Notice issued July 19, 2019, the U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) sought comments related to plans for clearing a portion of the C-band to facilitate the deployment of 5G in the continental U.S., including the ACA Connects Coalition’s (“ACACC”) proposal to repurpose up to 370 MHz of C-band spectrum.

Filings from a number of stakeholders reinforced the message that the ACACC proposal is not an actionable path forward for clearing a portion of the C-band, and reaffirmed that the C-Band Alliance’s proposal is the safest, most effective, and most efficient way to make C-band spectrum available for 5G.

## **Wireless Interests**

### AT&T

- “Most importantly, the ACA/CCA/Charter proposes to impose one technical solution—fiber—for an entire industry—the video content programming and distribution sector. No subset of stakeholders—whether earth station operators, terrestrial facilities owners, or satellite service providers—should force technology choices upon the entire ecosystem.”

### Verizon

- “A satellite operator-led transition is the fastest, most streamlined, and least risky approach to repurposing C-band spectrum.”
- “[T]he ACA/CCA/Charter proposal contains legal infirmities, lacks specificity, and fails to set a course for repurposing 3.7-4.2 GHz spectrum.”
- “[The ACA/CCA/Charter] proposal offers scant details to explain how an incentive auction would work...This framework is not ready for prime time.”

## **Industry Groups**

### National Association of Broadcasters (NAB)

- “By restricting or eliminating C-band and forcing content distribution to fiber, the ACA Coalition seeks to undermine intermodal competition for their new fiber services and secure a price-setting stranglehold on the content distribution business. Put simply, they want to get paid to eliminate competition. Nice work if you can get it.”
- “If the FCC adopts the ACA Proposal, the FCC could effectively be forcing all television and radio programming distribution to migrate in the near-term to an untested, enormously complex fiber distribution system that would also provide fiber providers with increased price-setting power. The Commission should reject this approach.”

### North American Broadcasters Association (NABA)

- “The economic challenges for broadcast content collection and distribution that would ensue with the major loss of C-Band spectrum proposed in the ACA Proposal are significant.”
- “There are simply too many unknowns in the ACA Proposal to justify deployment of fiber as a universal satellite replacement.”

## [Alaska Telecom Association](#)

- “The ACA Connects Coalition has proposed a spectrum clearing plan which would move MVPDs to fiber delivery. This is an unworkable solution for Alaska. Indeed, the ACA Connects Coalition itself observes that, ‘fiber delivery is not a possible solution for remote areas of Alaska,’ and that ‘[s]uitable alternative solutions must be made available for incumbent C-Band operators who provide critical services throughout the State.’”

## **C-Band Incumbents**

### [Content companies \(Joint comments of CBS Corporation, Discovery, Inc., FOX Corporation, The Walt Disney Company, Univision Communications Inc., and Viacom Inc.\)](#)

- “In the 13 months since the NPRM was issued, the Content Companies, C-band Alliance (“CBA”), the National Association of Broadcasters (“NAB”), and other programmers and stakeholders have worked collaboratively and agreed in principle on a plan that would achieve these goals by reallocating 200 MHz of the C-band, balanced with appropriate protections to mitigate the likelihood of interference to reception of video downlink by earth station incumbents in the repacked band at 3900-4200 MHz. That plan is ripe for adoption.”
- “In contrast, the proposal of the ACA Connects Coalition to overhaul the video distribution system in the U.S. from satellite to fiber does not grapple with substantial science and engineering questions. In particular, the ACA Connects Coalition proposal underestimates the complexity, timing, reliability challenges, and cost that would arise from an attempt to change the video distribution infrastructure from one based primarily on satellite to one based mostly on fiber.”

## [Cumulus and Westwood One](#)

- “Cumulus and Westwood One have serious concerns regarding the technical viability of the [ACA Connects] Proposal and for the reasons stated herein, request that the Proposal not be adopted... The Proponents’ assertion that fiber can be installed and operational, even in urban areas, within 18 months is far from realistic.”
- “For a variety of reasons, the Proponents’ Proposal fails to provide the same level of certainty as that presented by the CBA.”
- “Proponents’ claim that 370 MHz can be cleared in 36 months without the construction and launch of new satellites is based on an erroneous factual premise, and, therefore, Proponents’ estimated timetable for implementing 5G service lacks an accurate factual foundation.”

## [Globecast](#)

- “ACA Connects has overhyped the ability of fiber to substitute for C-band, overstated the amount of C-band spectrum that can be effectively repurposed without harming the video programming industry and underestimates the challenges in time and resources to increase the deployment of fiber to substitute for [SES].”
- “Under the ACA Connects proposal, all video programmers satellite downloads will be crammed into the upper 130 MHz of the C-band, significantly limiting the ability to provide, for example, live events programming because of the competing demands for spectrum from 24-hour programmers with dedicated transponders.”

## [LDS Church](#)

- “All C-band earth station operators should have the option to switch to fiber, but none should have the obligation to do so.”

## PSSI Global Services

- “The proposal by ACA Connects, in addition to being based upon a wholly unrealistic estimate of the time and effort to replace the C-band with fiber, would have a catastrophic impact on the video content distribution system . . . by destroying the ability to provide the quality video programming that transportable companies like PSSI provide for live events coverage.”
- “The ACA Connects proposal is also wholly unrealistic when it comes to the timing in which the transition to fiber as a transmission medium could be accomplished. Clearance of 370 MHz of spectrum within 36 months is not credible, especially without large incentives (separate and apart, as noted in the previous section, from the enormous leap of faith that non-MVPD programming can even exist on only 130 MHz). The ACA Connects timetable ignores the practical legal and construction issues that historically have long delayed fiber deployment.”

## QVC and HSN

- “Until further and comprehensive details are provided on the [ACA] Proposal and those details are fully analyzed, QVC/HSN continue to believe the CBA Plan, with incremental modifications recommended in the record, provides the best assurance of uninterrupted video programming distribution services, while allowing for a staged reallocation of 200 MHz of C-band spectrum for 5G terrestrial services over the next three years.”

## Riverfront Broadcasting / LinkUp / WTVY-TV

- “[W]e find it virtually impossible to see an urban fiber solution for headends in less than 5 years, let alone 18 months. Since most of our customers transmitter sites are in remote forests, corn fields and mountain sites fiber will likely never reach the majority of these locations.”
- Under the ACA Connects proposal, “our content would be riding on hundreds of individual point-to-point fiber connections instead of a single, integrated, and highly reliable C-Band network solution. Appropriate redundancy and secure network design must be fully incorporated into any solution to avoid negatively affecting service quality to nearly 120 million American homes.”
- Under the ACA Connects proposal, “it is not clear to us who would be responsible for managing the process of transitioning what could easily be hundreds of individually-owned radio stations, TV stations and cable headends in the urban areas from satellite to fiber.”



*The C-Band Alliance (CBA) was formed in October 2018 by the four leading global satellite operators – Intelsat (NYSE: I), SES (Euronext Paris: SESG), Eutelsat (Euronext Paris: ETL) and Telesat. The role of the CBA is to implement the safe and efficient clearing and repurposing of mid-band spectrum in the U.S., accelerating the deployment of 5G services and innovation, serving all Americans. The CBA is designed to act as a facilitator as described in the companies’*

*breakthrough, market-based proposal to clear a portion of C-band spectrum under a U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) proceeding. Follow our mission...visit [www.c-bandalliance.com](http://www.c-bandalliance.com). Follow us on Twitter at [@cbandalliance](https://twitter.com/cbandalliance) and on LinkedIn at [C-Band Alliance](https://www.linkedin.com/company/c-band-alliance).*

