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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,  
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

WEBSITE: <https://commerce.senate.gov>

October 4, 2022

The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel  
Chairwoman  
Federal Communications Commission  
45 L Street, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairwoman Rosenworcel:

Amateur radio services often provide the first functional communications networks in the wake of a natural disaster. After Hurricane Katrina, amateur radio operators were able to establish communications networks for Federal disaster relief agencies and the Red Cross to use throughout southern Mississippi, where the primary emergency response network was not operational.<sup>1</sup> Amateur radio operators in Mississippi are now relaying critical emergency communications between victims of Hurricane Ian and emergency responders.<sup>2</sup>

I appreciate that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) recognized how vital amateur radio services can be in times of emergency when granting a limited waiver of section 97.307(f) of the FCC's rules. This limited waiver will allow amateur radio operators to assist Federal, state, and local emergency response officials in efforts to recover from the damage of Hurricane Ian.<sup>3</sup>

There are several important proceedings that the Commission has not acted in a timely manner to complete, including a proceeding to amend amateur radio service rules. Amateur radio operators, like all spectrum users, deserve clear rules and regulatory certainty. This matter has been a long standing concern of mine. In fact, several years ago I introduced legislation to require the Commission to apply its residential land use regulations evenly to amateur radio antennas. The Commission should examine amateur radio service rules regularly to allow for innovation and experimentation in amateur radio services that help to develop new technology.

<sup>1</sup> Gregory Sarratt, *Hurricane Katrina Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Relief Effort*, ARRL (March 7, 2006), <https://transition.fcc.gov/pshs/docs/advisory/hkip/GSpeakers060306/ACT1045.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Allie Martin, *Tupelo Ham Radio Operators Help Hurricane Ian Victims*, WCBI (September 29, 2022), <https://www.wcbi.com/tupelo-ham-radio-operators-help-hurricane-ian-victims/>.

<sup>3</sup> *Emergency Request for a Temporary Waiver of Section 97.307(f) of the Commission's Rules*, DA 22-1011, Order (September 27, 2022).

Please provide a report outlining what measures the Commission will undertake, or is undertaking, to support amateur radio services. In the report, please provide a timeline of when the Commission will act on pending rulemakings and petitions for rulemaking that are critical to the amateur radio community. These unfinished proceedings include WTB Docket 16-239 and petitions for rulemaking RM-11759 and RM-11828. I request that you provide this report to my staff no later than October 28, 2022.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and your commitment to ensuring that amateur radio services continue to support the public interest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Roger F. Wicker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Roger" being particularly prominent.

Roger F. Wicker  
Ranking Member