

## **BoatUS, Stakeholders Ask FCC to Reconsider Approval of Ligado L-Band Wireless Plan**

### ***Wireless network threatens to interfere with nation's GPS system***

SPRINGFIELD, Va., Oct. 28, 2020 – A coalition of groups whose users rely on the Global Positioning System (GPS) wants the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to change its mind about an [April 20 decision to permit Ligado Networks](#) to begin construction of a land-based industrial 5G (fifth generation) “L-Band” wireless network. The group is concerned that once operable, the network will negatively impact the reliability of the nation’s Global Positioning System (GPS).

In a letter sent yesterday signed by 78 GPS stakeholder groups including the [Keep GPS Working Coalition](#) and Boat Owners Association of The United States ([BoatUS](#)) to US Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee Chair Robert Wicker (R-MS) and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell (D-WA), legislators were urged to reverse the [Ligado Order](#). It requests the legislator’s “direct involvement to protect the satellite communications and GPS services that we provide and are relied on by tens of millions of Americans every day.” The Commerce Committee’s extensive responsibilities include science, technology and communications policy.

Ligado’s slice of licensed “L-Band” spectrum, designated for space-based navigation and communications, is located near lower frequency bands used by hundreds of millions of GPS units in public safety, health, government, transportation, military, commerce, agriculture and more. BoatUS and other coalition members believe that, as the Ligado network is rolled out, instances of signal interference will increase.

“This is about boaters – and many others’ – continued ability to safely navigate and get reliable weather forecasts so we know when to go out or head home, and safety-of-life issues especially when on-the-water help is needed,” said BoatUS Manager of Government Affairs, David Kennedy. “The FCC’s decision threatens GPS reliability for countless consumers, farmers, ranchers, pilots, boat owners, surveyors, construction companies and other private GPS users who will be forced to suffer the network’s interference with their GPS devices or require them to pay to replace them.”

The coalition believes that the *Ligado Order* disregarded mountains of evidence highlighting the interference issue, ignored established technical standards, relied only on limited studies with vague and impractical criteria to assess interference, and was made during the COVID-19 pandemic while stakeholders were dealing with the health crisis. They claim FCC also ignored serious concerns from the federal government as well as agencies including the departments of Defense, Transportation, Commerce, Interior, Justice and Homeland Security, in addition to NASA, the National Science Foundation, Federal Aviation Administration and U.S. Coast Guard.

###

Suggested social media post:

@BoatUS, stakeholders ask FCC to reconsider approval of Ligado L-band wireless plan to avoid interference with GPS systems <https://bit.ly/35BDqWs> #BoatUSonWatch

About Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS):

Celebrating more than 50 years, BoatUS is the nation’s largest organization of recreational boaters with more than 700,000 members. We are the boat owners’ voice on Capitol Hill and fight for their rights. We are The Boat Owners Auto Club and help ensure a roadside trailer breakdown doesn’t end a boating or fishing trip before it begins. When boats break down on the water, TowBoatUS brings them safely back to

the launch ramp or dock, 24/7. BoatUS offers GEICO Marine Insurance policies that give boat owners affordable, specialized coverage and superior service they need. We help keep boaters safe and our waters clean with assistance from the nonprofit BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water. Visit [BoatUS.com](http://BoatUS.com).