



NEWS – For Immediate Release

**SIA Media Contact: Dean Hirasawa
Endeavour Communications
dhirasawa@sia.org**

SATELLITE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION APPLAUDS RURAL CONNECTIVITY GOALS AND PRECISION AGRICULTURE LEGISLATION

Washington, D.C., January 29, 2018 – The Satellite Industry Association (SIA) today applauded proposed legislation that would require the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to establish a Task Force in order to meet the connectivity and technology needs of precision agriculture in the United States. The Precision Agriculture Connectivity Act of 2018 was introduced by Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS) and Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN). The bipartisan bill was also co-sponsored by Senator Steve Daines (R-MT) and Jon Tester (D-MT). A House version of the bipartisan legislation was introduced by Representative Bob Latta (R-OH-05) and Representative Dave Loebsack (D-IA-02).

The proposed legislation would develop policy recommendations to promote the rapid, expanded deployment of fixed and mobile broadband Internet access service on unserved croplands and ranch lands, with a goal of achieving reliable service on 95 percent of croplands and ranch lands in the United States by 2025. Such coverage would allow farmers to utilize precision agriculture mobile devices and sensors to collect real time data about the fields, automate field management and maximize limited resources in order to reduce costs and increase crop yields by as much as 70 percent by 2050. In order to achieve these goals, under the proposed legislation, the FCC would be mandated to establish a Task Force for meeting the connectivity and technology needs of precision agriculture in the U.S. Such a Task Force would be made up of several individuals including those from Internet service providers and telecommunications infrastructure providers as well as members of the commercial satellite industry.

“SIA supports the proposed legislation and the broadband connectivity goals outlined in the Precision Agriculture Connectivity Act,” said Tom Stroup, President of SIA. “High quality, ubiquitous satellite connectivity will be critical if the United States is to successfully implement the precision agriculture initiatives designed with the goal of significantly increasing farm yields and overall agricultural productivity. Today, the commercial satellite industry already plays an integral role in the delivery of wireless broadband technologies by serving millions of U.S. customers, including those in underserved and unserved areas of the U.S. Alongside existing capability, next-generation broadband satellite systems hold the promise of high-speed, low-latency broadband connectivity anywhere on Earth. The satellite industry looks forward to working with the Commission as well as Internet and telecom providers to leverage a suite of satellite technologies in order to meet the legislation’s precision agriculture connectivity goals and maintain America’s long term leadership in global food production.”

Satellite Industry Association – 1200 18th Street, Suite 1001, Washington, DC 20036

Tel +1 202 503-1560 **Website** <http://www.sia.org>

SIA is a full-service trade association that represents commercial satellite companies as the unified voice of the U.S. satellite industry on policy, regulatory and legislative issues affecting the satellite business.

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About The Satellite Industry Association

SIA is a U.S.-based trade association providing representation of the leading satellite operators, service providers, manufacturers, launch services providers, and ground equipment suppliers. For more than two decades, SIA has advocated on behalf of the U.S. satellite industry on policy, regulatory, and legislative issues affecting the satellite business. For more information, visit www.sia.org.

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