

PUBLIC LAW 118–85—SEPT. 26, 2024

LAUNCH COMMUNICATIONS ACT

Public Law 118–85
118th Congress

An Act

Sept. 26, 2024
[S. 1648]

To facilitate access to the electromagnetic spectrum for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries, and for other purposes.

Launch
Communications
Act.
47 USC 303 note.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Launch Communications Act”.

SEC. 2. ACCESS TO ELECTROMAGNETIC SPECTRUM FOR COMMERCIAL SPACE LAUNCHES AND REENTRIES.

Deadline.

(a) SERVICE RULES; ALLOCATION.—
(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall—

(A) complete any proceeding in effect as of such date of enactment related to the adoption of service rules for access to the frequencies described in subsection (c) for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries, including technical specifications, eligibility requirements, and coordination procedures to preserve the defense capabilities of the United States; and

(B) allocate on a secondary basis such frequencies for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries.

Requirements.

(2) COORDINATION WITH NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION.—The coordination procedures adopted under paragraph (1)(A) shall include requirements for persons conducting commercial space launches and commercial space reentries to coordinate with the Assistant Secretary regarding access to the frequencies described in subsection (c) for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries.

(3) LIMITATION.—Access to the frequencies described in subsection (c) in accordance with the service rules adopted under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1), and the allocation of such frequencies under subparagraph (B) of that paragraph, shall be limited to the use of such frequencies for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries.

Deadline.
Regulations.

(b) STREAMLINING OF PROCESS FOR GRANTING AUTHORIZATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall issue new regulations to streamline the process for granting authorizations for access to the frequencies described in subsection (c) for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries so as to provide for—

(1) authorizations that include access to such frequencies for multiple commercial space launches from 1 or more Federal space launch sites and multiple commercial space reentries to 1 or more Federal space reentry sites;

(2) authorizations that include access to such frequencies for multiple commercial space launches from 1 or more private space launch sites and multiple commercial space reentries to 1 or more private space reentry sites, upon successful coordination with any Federal space launch site within a range for access to such frequencies such that such a commercial space launch or commercial space reentry would not cause harmful interference with Federal systems;

(3) authorizations that include access to multiple uses of such frequencies for commercial space launch or commercial space reentry;

(4) electronic filing and processing of applications for authorizations for access to such frequencies for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries; and

(5) improved coordination by the Commission with the Assistant Secretary (who shall coordinate with the head of any other Federal agency, as the Assistant Secretary considers appropriate) to increase the speed of review of applications for authorizations for access to such frequencies for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries, including coordination to increase automation similar to the automation described in the service rules established by the Commission and the Assistant Secretary to promote the development and use, by entities other than the Federal Government, of spectrum in other bands, including bands with the frequencies between 71 and 76 gigahertz, between 81 and 86 gigahertz, and between 92 and 95 gigahertz.

(c) FREQUENCIES DESCRIBED.—The frequencies described in this subsection are the frequencies between 2025 and 2110 megahertz, between 2200 and 2290 megahertz, and between 2360 and 2395 megahertz.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Each range of frequencies described in this section shall be construed to be inclusive of the upper and lower frequencies in the range.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ASSISTANT SECRETARY.—The term “Assistant Secretary” means the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information.

(2) COMMERCIAL SPACE LAUNCH.—The term “commercial space launch” means a launch licensed under chapter 509 of title 51, United States Code.

(3) **COMMERCIAL SPACE REENTRY.**—The term “commercial space reentry” means a reentry licensed under chapter 509 of title 51, United States Code.

(4) **COMMISSION.**—The term “Commission” means the Federal Communications Commission.

Approved September 26, 2024.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 1648 (H.R. 682):

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 118–156 (Comm. on Energy and Commerce) accompanying H.R. 682.

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Vol. 169 (2023): Oct. 31, considered and passed Senate.

Vol. 170 (2024): Sept. 17, considered and passed House.

