As a first responder, I am well aware of the importance of good communications and cannot support this petition as it offers little to the amateur radio hobby while severely disrupting emergency communications (EMCOMM) that are well supported by so many dedicated ARES/RACES personnel, Hospitals, Fire and Police Departments, the Red Cross and other

necessary and invaluable services so vital during times of crisis.

The petition suggests that approval would enhance US security and improve the development of amateur radio. Neither are true. The rapid advancement, ease of use, and high security risk of current worldwide cellular wireless and internet technology, implies that ham radio poses very little additional risk to the country’s security. These same technologies also dissuade potentially new hams as global communications already exist and are so easy to acquire and use inexpensively. It is difficult enough to encourage new hams into the hobby without additional constraints and regulations that made sense in an earlier time when those new technologies did not exist.

Whenever landlines, cell phones and internet are not functioning, emergency communications can rely on timely and accurate reporting by dedicated amateurs, especially during the first critical 24-72 hours before government services can be mobilized. The loss of reliable digital communications makes rescue and remedial efforts harder to plan for and execute. Printed forms are easier to understand than audio reports, and provide for adequate documentation. Analog transmission cannot do any of that.

Amateur radio cannot be relegated to the equipment and methods of the 50s and 60s and still be expected to survive. Technology continues to evolve at a rapid rate and amateur radio must do the same or perish. We must continue to encourage amateur radio to compete with private or public organizations interested only in financial gain. Amateur radio is about enjoyment, experiment, excitement and public service.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this petition.

Lt. Andrew Lester AE7LW

Skagit County Fire District 13

I would like to submit my disapproval of this intended action. It will disrupt all the progress put into the transmission of messages that a lot of folks have put work into to make EMCOMM a viable and very important aspect of our service that ARES offers to our agencies during actual emergent situations. Transmission of data digitally is vital for keeping the integrity of the message whole while going thru more than one station. Hospital communications depend on this to pass important medical names/treatments etc that must be copied/sent exactly as intended without inflection of voice or misspelling of important drug names etc. Removing/changing this element of amateur radio is a huge mistake and must be thought through better than an action like this. Moves such as this provide a back step rather than a move forward and I am against this motion.