I am writing in support of WT Docket No. 16-239, The Amendment of Part 97 of the Commission’s Amateur Radio Service Rules ) to Permit Greater Flexibility in Data Communications.

I became an Amateur Radio Operator because of, and have been involved with, emergency communication for close to 30 years. The ability of digital modes to transmit large volumes of information accurately and quickly has been recognized throughout that time. Digital modes have developed continually for a variety of use in Amateur Radio. The development of Pactor modes has been important in emergency communications.

The current 300 baud symbol rate limitation was instituted around 1980 by the Commission as a mechanism to manage HF digital modes (both FEC and ARQ) that would be compatible with typical HF signal widths in use. Since then, technical advancements in modulation, coding technology and Digital Signal Processing (DSP) now make it possible to implement signiﬁcantly faster, more robust digital protocols with better spectrum efﬁciency (e.g. PSK31/63, MT63, Pactor 2, Pactor 3, WINMOR, ARDOP, VARA, Pactor 4, and other popular amateur modes). These modes are possible and affordable due primarily to the signiﬁcant advancements in digital signal processing, cost reductions in computers, sound cards, and DSP processing chips since the original 300 baud symbol rate restriction was instituted. So, in 2018, the symbol rate limit is a deterrent to advancing the radio art now that modern encoding techniques are available.

The Basis and purpose of Amateur Radio are in 97.1. The first two are providing emergency communications and advancement of the radio art. Removal of the 300 baud symbol rate limitation is important to both.

Many of the objections raised have nothing to do with this one, simple, change and should not be included in consideration of this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.