

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JONATHAN S. ADELSTEIN**

Re: Inquiry Regarding Carrier Current Systems, including Broadband over Power Line Systems; ET Docket No. 03-104, Notice of Inquiry (adopted Apr. 23, 2003)

The promise of Broadband over Power Line (BPL) systems is enormous. One of my top priorities as a Commissioner is to speed the deployment of broadband and other advanced services. I believe that the Commission must do what it can to extend the benefits of the latest broadband technologies – such as broadband over power line – to all Americans, whether they live in the inner city, the suburbs, or rural areas. I am encouraged that there already are several BPL experiments underway across the country, and that we are initiating this proceeding to ask questions and explore what further changes to our Part 15 rules may be necessary to facilitate the further deployment of this exciting technology.

I recently outlined an approach to spectrum management that promotes continued industry development, employs a light regulatory touch, and recognizes the unique traits of the electromagnetic radio spectrum as a national resource. While power line broadband may not fall within the traditional scope of spectrum management, BPL systems use existing electrical power lines as a transmission medium to provide communications by coupling RF energy onto the power line. Thus, I believe that while we must be mindful of harmful interference, we cannot let unsupported claims stand in the way of such an innovation as BPL systems. Provided that the engineering bears out, I believe that we need to push the boundaries to accommodate new technologies. A little noticed provision of the Communications Act, Section 157, reads that “[i]t shall be the policy of the United States to encourage the provision of new technologies and services to the public.” I am fully committed to that mission to promote new technologies, and to provide a framework for innovation so they can succeed.

For these reasons, the Commission’s goal must be to achieve the greatest amount of bandwidth for the greatest number of people – today we take an important step in furthering that goal. I look forward to reviewing the record in this proceeding to learn more about the ability of BPL systems to offer new avenues for broadband services.

Finally, I very much appreciate the interest in including questions in the NOI that address universal service, competition, and other policy issues that may be associated with the provision of broadband over power line. However, the technology still is in the earliest stages of development and testing, and the NOI was drafted with the sole focus of addressing the technical issues associated with BPL systems, not the policy ones. This item does not seem the right place to tackle these important questions. I will support revisiting these non-technical issues once the Commission gets a better understanding of the technology and associated deployment of BPL systems.