

**SEPARATE STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN MICHAEL K. POWELL**

RE: Wireless Broadband Access Task Force Report

Access to broadband is a catalyst for positive change – with the potential to bring resources and jobs to communities across the country. In recognition of this, our leaders have increasingly set ambitious goals for this nation to reach. The President of the United States talked about wanting broadband availability for all Americans by 2007 – a truly bold goal that will only be met by the use of every possible broadband tool at our disposal – particularly wireless broadband alternatives.

Last May, I created the Wireless Broadband Access Task Force to study existing wireless broadband policies and make recommendations in the Commission's policies to help accelerate the deployment of wireless broadband technologies and services for all Americans. This multidisciplinary team of FCC staff met with equipment manufacturers, services providers, state and local governments, and consumers and other stakeholders around the country to assess the current state of deployment. Today, I am pleased to support their findings and recommendations.

The *Report's* findings confirm that the development and deployment of wireless broadband technologies are critical to ensuring that reliable and ubiquitous broadband services are available to all Americans. In particular, wireless broadband offers both mobility and simplicity of use. Technological advances in wireless broadband, such as mobile technologies, mesh networks and short, medium and long range wireless networks are providing a solid foundation for improved delivery of broadband services. In addition, the proliferation of new wireless broadband applications, ranging from Wi-Fi hot spots, WISPs, voice-over-IP and public safety and distance learning applications are on the rise and promise to empower users and their communities in new and exciting ways.

This Commission has put a high priority on making sure Americans have access to broadband services through multiple facilities-based platforms. Already, our wireless broadband policies and initiatives have helped foster innovation and encourage capital investment in wireless broadband services. For instance, by increasing the amount of spectrum available, allowing maximum technical and regulatory flexibility, and making it easier for entities to gain access to spectrum through secondary markets, the Commission has helped foster the introduction of new and advanced wireless broadband technologies and consumer services.

The *Report* makes several recommendations that build upon the strong foundation the Commission has already established over the last few years; including, expanding the availability of wireless broadband services offered in licensed spectrum; enhancing the success of wireless broadband via license-exempt devices and equipment; maintaining a hands off regulatory approach to IP-based services; and improving the Commission's existing outreach efforts. It is my hope that the Commission will heed these recommendations and remain proactive in identifying and understanding emerging

technologies and ensuring that our policies do not hinder their advancement. The American public benefits most when our policies enable consumers and businesses to fully tap the benefits of emerging technologies. New video and voice-over-IP and integrated wireless broadband services promise to stimulate even more significant growth in the near and long term. Thus, the Commission should continue to carry out and expand upon its accomplishments to help spawn these and other new services.

The Commission needs to continue to create an innovative regulatory environment that will provide opportunities beyond today's technological horizon. The Task Force's *Report* offers some concrete suggestions as to how we can make that possible and is a positive step for progress in implementing the Commission's broadband vision.

Finally, I commend the dedicated and talented Task Force staff for their efforts. John Branscome and Lauren Van Wazer have shown extraordinary diligence and skill in leading the task force over these past eight months. I also applaud the work of Paul Murray, Erin Boone, Peter Corea, Chelsea Fallon, Meribeth McCarrick, Paul Nagle, and Leon Jackler. Congratulations to their entire team.