

Remarks of FCC Commissioner Ajit Pai
“Unlocking Investment and Innovation in the Digital Age:
The Path to a 21st-Century FCC”

On July 18, 2012, Commissioner Ajit Pai of the Federal Communications Commission delivered his first major speech since taking office at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. During this address, he discussed how the federal government can help accelerate economic growth and enhance job creation in the information and communications technology sector. In particular, Commissioner Pai outlined an agenda for how the FCC can modernize its regulatory approach to remove barriers to infrastructure investment and technological innovation.

Summary of Principles and Proposals

- The FCC should be as nimble as the industry it oversees.
 - Establish an Office of Entrepreneurial Innovation, charged with reviewing proposals for new technologies and services within one year, consistent with section 7 of the Communications Act.
 - Enhance transparency by creating centralized webpage to keep track of FCC’s compliance with statutory and internal deadlines.
 - Establish nine-month deadline to resolve applications for review.
 - Establish six-month deadline to resolve waiver requests.
- The FCC should prioritize the removal of regulatory barriers to infrastructure investment.
 - Establish an IP Transition Task Force to create recommendations within nine months on how the FCC can accelerate the transition to an IP world.
 - Forbear from applying section 652 to allow pro-competitive mergers between CLECs and cable operators.
 - Ensure USF support is predictable.
 - Move forward quickly with Phase II of the Connect America Fund for price-cap carriers and wireless providers.
 - Rethink the yearly adjustment of spending limits on rate-of-return carriers.
 - Settle the nine-year-old contributions reform proceeding.
- The FCC should accelerate its efforts to allocate additional spectrum for mobile broadband.
 - An “all of the above” approach is needed for spectrum policy.
 - Adopt rules for AWS-4 by September 2012.
 - Adopt rules to facilitate broadband in the WCS spectrum by August 2012.
 - Commence rulemaking on incentive auctions in fall 2012 and set a deadline to conduct the auctions by June 30, 2014.