

STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER ROBERT M. McDOWELL

RE: Comprehensive Review of Licensing and Operating Rules for Satellite Services

I am pleased to vote to approve today's notice of proposed rulemaking to streamline our licensing and operating rules for satellite service providers. At the outset, I congratulate and thank the team in the International Bureau for your dedication and creativity.

Satellite technology plays an important role in meeting the communications needs of public safety entities, energy and enterprise businesses, and retail consumers. Even in places where terrestrial wireless coverage is abundant, some consumers may remain unreachable due to challenging terrain, insularity or both. Satellite service providers, on the other hand, have the technical capability to connect to consumers in these areas. Given satellite technology's growing significance in the communications marketplace, I expect that interested parties will greatly appreciate the fresh look and common sense approach we propose here.

In addition to seeking comment on issues of general interest, including reporting requirements, forms and rain fade compensation, the notice literally sets forth in numerical order the proposed Part 25 licensing and technical rule changes and asks valuable questions about each one.

One proposal is particularly noteworthy. In seeking to modernize Section 25.114 of our rules, we acknowledge that today's state-of-the-art satellites employ spot-beams. Specifically, we propose to streamline our current rule to allow applicants for space stations with large numbers of identical spot beams to supply antenna gain contour diagrams for one transmit and one receive antenna beam only. The good news is that this idea is a win-win-win. Such a change will greatly reduce the burden on our FCC staff, as well as the license applicants. The resulting double efficiency will reduce costs for both taxpayers and regulatees alike. Ultimately, these cost savings are passed on to consumers of satellite services.

Thank you also to Chairman Genachowski for bringing this notice forward. I also acknowledge the interested parties that assisted the IB team with this effort. I am eager to engage and to learn more in the coming months.