

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER MIGNON L. CLYBURN**

Re: *Revision of Part 15 of the Commission's Rules to Permit Unlicensed National Information Infrastructure (U-NII) Devices in the 5 GHz Band*

In his State of the Union Address, President Obama spoke of “a smarter government that sets priorities and invests in broad-based growth.” Our first priority, he said should be “making America a magnet for new jobs and manufacturing.” Without a doubt, the wireless service industry is one sector where smart policy can promote tremendous growth. One wireless analyst stated that, in 2011, this industry was responsible for 3.8 million jobs, or 2.6 percent of all domestic employment. According to other reports, the wireless industry now contributes, more to our nation's GDP, than the agriculture, hotels and lodging, air transportation, and motor vehicle manufacturing industries. In light of all the wireless industry brings to our economy, promoting growth in this sector can greatly advance the President's domestic policy goals.

Under Chairman Genachowski's leadership, the Commission has been adopting innovative policies to promote broader deployment and adoption of mobile broadband services. These include the data roaming order, the TV White Spaces proceeding, the interoperability in the lower 700 MHz band proceeding, mHealth initiatives, and the Learning On The Go pilot program. This proceeding to promote unlicensed services, in the 5 GHz band, is another prime example of how smart government policy can advance growth in the wireless industry and the overall economy.

When the FCC first allocated unlicensed spectrum, in the 1980s, it was primarily used for cordless phones, baby monitors, and garage door openers. Then Wi-Fi hit the scene and the demand has been off the charts. In 2005, “tens of millions” of Wi-Fi devices were sold globally. In 2011, at least 150 million of those devices were sold only in the U.S. Unlicensed Wi-Fi offload is now an integral part of the way mobile carriers deliver their services. In 2011, Consumer Federation of America found that Wi-Fi offload allows wireless carriers to save more than \$25 billion per year, in deployment costs. According to some commenters, the annual contribution of the unlicensed wireless sector to our Nation's economy is estimated to be more than \$50 billion per year.

The Nation's demand for unlicensed services has increased so dramatically that we need more spectrum to support these services. The 2.4 GHz band, while critical to the success of Wi-Fi and other unlicensed technologies, is increasingly congested particularly in major cities. Densely populated centers are the most expensive geographic areas to deploy licensed networks.

Therefore, I commend the staff, for recommending rule proposals that could make up to an additional 195 megahertz of spectrum, available for unlicensed services. I hope commenters will provide us with thoughtful detailed recommendations on how we can adopt technical rules that will create incentives for the industry to make the most efficient use of this spectrum. As the item points out, there are a number of technical issues to be resolved and we will have to coordinate with NTIA on the impact of these proposed rules on federal users in the 5 GHz band. But it is important that we get started on resolving these issues right away. The sooner we solve these issues, the sooner American innovation can show leadership in developing this band for unlicensed services.

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