

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MIGNON L. CLYBURN**

Re: *Amendment of Part 2 of the Commission's Rules for Federal Earth Stations Communicating with Non-Federal Fixed Satellite Service Space Stations; Federal Space Station Use of the 399.9 400.05 MHz Band; and Allocation of Spectrum for Non-Federal Space Launch Operations, ET Docket No. 13-115; RM-11341.*

Let me begin by expressing my sincere thanks to Chairman Genachowski for elevating this agency's profile and re-energizing the dedicated and talented career staff, here, at the FCC.

This proceeding began with two NTIA requests. First, it asked the Commission to consider rule changes, which would allow the federal government to use earth stations, in the FSS bands, with more protection from interference, than they currently have. Second, it requested changes, which would allow federal agencies to deploy a new satellite system of unused spectrum, in the MSS band. The OET staff could have presented an item that simply addressed the complex issues necessary to advance these two requests. Instead, the team took a more ambitious approach, and found a creative way, to also promote our Nation's vital interest in communications services during space travel.

For nearly a half a century, space travel and communications industry collaboration has brought us some of the most exciting scientific breakthroughs. The American public's first glimpse of this probably came, on July 20, 1969, with the television broadcast of Neil Armstrong's giant leap for mankind. But millions of Americans now enjoy satellite TV and radio services as a result of this collaboration. It also produced services that save lives, by aiding search and rescue operations, as well as global access to advanced medicine, geospatial information, and broadband.

Now, our country has reached a point where this collaboration between space aviation and communications must leap to the next level. The ending of NASA's space shuttle program means that we must explore even more innovative ways to continue our Nation's leadership in space education, exploration and discovery. That is why, in 2010, President Obama made crystal clear that we should be "committed to encouraging and facilitating the growth, of a commercial space sector," that "advances U.S. leadership, in the generation of new markets." The good news, here, is that several private companies have been working for years, and in some cases for decades, to make substantial investments in companies that can transport cargo, and in the future, our fellow citizens, into space, to support the International Space Station and other NASA initiatives.

The Commission's allocation and service rules must support the growing communications needs of the private space launch industry. To assist prior launches, we issued Special Temporary Authorities, or STAs, under our Part 5 experimental rules. But these STAs, only allow for non-interference operation. Given the high cost of launches and the safety concerns of manned spaceflights, relying on non-interference use of spectrum, is not a practical, long-term solution. Therefore, this NPRM offers well-defined application and coordination processes, to enable commercial operators, to directly acquire the optimal type of licenses needed, for communications during space launches. The Notice of Inquiry (NOI) section of the item properly tries to anticipate other communications needs of commercial space missions, such as re-entry, or the "on orbit" phase of a mission, that could require changes in spectrum allocations.

I thank Julie Knapp, Mark Settle, and the staff in the Office of Engineering and Technology, for their outstanding work on this item.