

**STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER AJIT PAI
ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY
COMMUNICATIONS AND VIDEO ACCESSIBILITY ACT (CVAA)**

July 19, 2013

When President George H.W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act into law twenty-three years ago this month, he expressed his hope that every American with a disability would “pass through once-closed doors into a new era of equality, independence, and freedom.” To me, it is those three words—equality, independence, and freedom—that represent the promise of making communications services accessible to all Americans with disabilities.

Access to communications can give people with disabilities an equal chance to succeed in our society. Access makes it easier for them to lead independent lives. And access helps provide them with the freedom to pursue their hopes and dreams.

This morning, our staff has ably summarized all of the steps that the Commission has taken to implement the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA). There is no need for me to repeat them here. It is worth mentioning, however, that Congress gave the Commission a challenging set of deadlines for establishing rules to ensure that accessibility requirements would keep pace with our fast-moving communications marketplace, and to date we have met every single one of those deadlines.

That is a record we should be proud of. I salute former Chairman Genachowski and Chairwoman Clyburn for their leadership—leadership that was critical in achieving this result. And most of all, I want to thank the Commission staff for all of their hard work parsing and implementing the CVAA. While the task before us has been daunting, you have never faltered. From the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau to the Media Bureau, from the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau to the Office of General Counsel and beyond, it has been a true team effort. You should take satisfaction in knowing that your work is helping to bring Americans with disabilities closer to achieving those three cherished goals: equality, independence, and freedom.