

STATEMENT OF FCC CHAIRMAN TOM WHEELER
NOVEMBER 14, 2013

Re: Commission Open Meeting Presentation on the Status of Universal Service Reform Implementation

First, thank you to the staff for the presentation. Also thanks to all the FCC staff who have been working for years to reform USF for the Internet age.

During my day two remarks to staff, I spoke about the need to break down the silos and work collaboratively across bureaus. I think that our work to reform universal service is a model for what I'm talking about -- as demonstrated by the fact that today's presentation included staff from the Wireline Competition and Wireless Bureaus, as well as the Office of Native Affairs and Policy. And the facts are that virtually every office in this agency has played and continues to play a part in modernizing USF.

Also, thank you to my fellow Commissioners for their work on this issue. Special thanks to Commissioner Clyburn. As evidenced by today's presentation, we made significant progress advancing our universal service reforms under her leadership as Acting Chairwoman. And previously, she played a key role in updating the High-Cost program as the Chair of the Joint Board on Universal Service.

Assuring that the opportunities of the new network extend to all Americans is one of the principal challenges we face at the FCC. I look forward to continuing the work of reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program -- as well as other components of the Fund -- with FCC staff and my fellow Commissioners, to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.