

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Technology Transitions Policy Task Force Presentation* (December 12, 2013)

Software developers often code “sandboxes” into their programs. This code allows others access to a portion of the program without harming the host platform. It provides an opportunity to experiment within the program, minimizing risk before introducing ideas at a broader scale.

Sandbox thinking is popular among start-ups in Silicon Valley. But why not put it to work in Washington? After all, testing big ideas in a small way is a good way to understand the consequences of our policy choices—and the impact they have on consumers—before unleashing them in the world at large.

The IP Transition strikes me as a terrific candidate for the sandbox. The movement from analog technologies to IP-based communications is big, so experimenting on a small scale is smart. We can test our ideas about next-generation network deployment and expose them to real world conditions. Better yet, let’s do it in location-specific trials and service-specific ways.

Let’s also do it soon. Because our networks are undergoing a profound transition. The ways we communicate and connect are evolving—fast. At the turn of the millennium, we had roughly 200 million switched access lines—or traditional phone lines. By the start of this year, we had only 96 million. On top of that, we had 42 million VoIP lines—an increase of nearly 80 percent since 2008. Add to this the fact that more than one in three households have cut the cord and only uses a wireless phone—and you get a sense of the change that is roiling our communications markets.

Let’s also approach the IP Transition with our eyes firmly on the future, but informed by the essential values of our past. As I have long suggested, there are four basic values in communications law—public safety, universal access, competition, and consumer protection. I am pleased to see that these fundamental values are part of this presentation today. They absolutely should guide as we move ahead and navigate this transition.

Thank you to the Chairman for making these issues a priority. Thank you also to the Technology Transitions Policy Task Force for your work to date. I look forward to the upcoming Order and to the new ideas this effort will yield. Because with the IP Transition, if we want to think outside of the box, the best place to start is the sandbox.