

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER AJIT PAI**

Re: *Ensuring Continuity of 911 Communications*, PS Docket No. 14-174.

“Be prepared.” Although the Boy Scouts made that simple motto famous, the American people have shown that there’s more than one way to interpret it. Some households stock gallons of fresh water and canned goods and keep a transistor radio or a charged cellphone ready just in case. Others own a generator so that when the power goes out their lights stay on. Yet still others—perhaps terrified of becoming the next Deputy Rick Grimes and awakening to a world overrun by zombies¹—have built underground bunkers complete with a year’s supply of food and gas masks for the whole family.² In short, many Americans are already preparing for disasters and are doing so in their own ways.

That’s why, when we commenced this proceeding nine months ago, I proposed a “simple alternative to more invasive battery backup mandates”—namely, letting consumers make decisions for themselves.³ After all, “now that most consumers have mobile phones, I doubt all of them will want to pay the cost of a new carrier-installed battery backup for their landline.”⁴

I support this *Order* because it adopts that consumer-driven approach and recognizes that no one-size-fits-all solution will work when it comes to disaster preparedness. As the *Order* puts it, “consumers may desire different amounts of backup power—or none at all—depending on their individual circumstances.”⁵ That’s exactly right. Enabling consumers to make their own choices allows them to do what’s best for them and their families.⁶

I look forward to collaborating with the staff of the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau and my colleagues as we continue to help consumers prepare for disasters.

¹ See AMC, *The Walking Dead* (Season 1, Episode 1: “Days Gone By”).

² See National Geographic Channel, *Doomsday Preppers*, <http://on.natgeo.com/1IopL0E> (including option to explore a “Zombie Outbreak Simulator”); see also Elizabeth Barber, “Kansas Will Be Prepared for the Zombie Apocalypse,” *Time* (Sept. 24, 2014), available at <http://ti.me/1qyH9FP>.

³ *Ensuring Customer Premises Equipment Backup Power for Continuity of Communications et al.*, PS Docket No. 14-174, GN Docket No. 13-5, WC Docket No. 05-25, RM-11358, RM-10593, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Declaratory Ruling, 29 FCC Rcd 14968, 15038 (2014) (Statement of Commissioner Ajit Pai).

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Order* at para. 44.

⁶ This approach also enables the Commission to avoid difficult questions of legal authority that attend more prescriptive government mandates in this area. Cf. *CTIA—The Wireless Ass’n v. FCC*, 530 F.3d 984 (D.C. Cir. 2008).