

**REMARKS OF FCC CHAIRMAN TOM WHEELER
AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
FCC-MAYO CLINIC BROADBAND HEALTH SUMMIT
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA
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Thank you, Commission Clyburn, for that warm welcome and for your leadership on the Commission's digital health efforts.

Special thanks to our host and the co-sponsor of today's event – The Mayo Clinic.

In particular, I'd like to recognize Mayo's national Director of Connected Care, Dr. Steve Ommen, for joining us today.

Also, thanks to Florida State Representative Mia Jones for her participation today and her work on these issues.

Finally, thank you all for joining us today.

As I am wont to do, I'd like to start with a quick history lesson.

We all know that the telephone was invented by Alexander Graham Bell. But who were the early adopters?

The first commercial telephone exchange was established in 1877 in Hartford, Connecticut. The first customers were 21 local doctors who wanted a link to the Capital Avenue Drugstore.

In 1879, Rochester, Minnesota got its first phone line, connecting the drugstore downtown to the farmhouse of Doctor William Worrall Mayo. I wonder whatever happened to that guy.

In the early 20th century, one doctor's manual said the telephone had become as necessary to physicians as the stethoscope.

The lesson is that our networks have been a defining force throughout history, changing the way we live and re-shaping industries – including healthcare.

Today's broadband networks – wired and wireless – have the potential to revolutionize healthcare like no technology before.

Just yesterday, I was at the Nicklaus Children's Hospital in Miami. This is a remarkable facility, and I'm not just saying that because it was founded by Jack Nicklaus. When I was growing up in Columbus, Ohio, the Nicklaus Pharmacy was on the same street where I lived. I followed Jack Nicklaus in high school, and we both attended THE Ohio State University. We visited their telehealth command center, and I saw first-hand the tools available today that allow hospitals to connect to patients around the community, around the state, and around the world. Sitting in Miami, we spoke with a speech therapist in the Florida Keys and saw how high-quality images could be sent between sites in order to allow for accurate diagnoses.

Later in the day, we visited a Florida Blue retail center, where I saw a demonstration of a Healthspot kiosk – a relatively simple tool that makes basic care more accessible. Without going to a healthcare facility per se, consumers are able to access healthcare services remotely.

Step back and look more broadly at leading trends and you get a sense of the tremendous impact broadband-enabled solutions hold for healthcare.

Most of you are familiar with the term Big Data. This refers to our ability to collect unprecedented amounts of information and the use of computers to analyze and learn from this data. My physician is fond of saying that medicine is all about the collection and use of data. Big data expands that reality to an amazing degree. It can empower individuals to play a more active role in their health care and make smarter choices; it can help caregivers coordinate and provide the best treatment; it can help advance medicine and boost the productivity of R&D. One analysis by McKinsey estimates that Big Data analytics and the innovations it enables could improve health outcomes and unlock more than \$300 billion annually in reduced healthcare spending.

But here's the point. Those McKinsey numbers are projections, not reality. When we talk about the power of broadband-enabled technologies to improve the quality of healthcare in America, we are not where we can be; we are not where we need to be.

Noted tech-sector analyst Mary Meeker puts out an annual review of the latest Internet trends. In this year's report, she had a slide to illustrate how the impact of the Internet is in many ways just beginning. She listed sectors of our economy and society and ranked them according to the Internet's impact. At the bottom of the list – along with government – was the healthcare industry.

Our collective challenge is how do we seize the opportunities of broadband communications to improve the quality of healthcare, save lives, and lower costs?

It starts with making sure that we have fast, fair, and open broadband networks available to all Americans.

To that end, we've seen significant progress in recent years. Since 2009, nearly 45 million Americans have adopted broadband, and 84 percent of Americans now use the Internet, up from 76 percent 5 years ago.

Since 2009, private companies have invested more than \$420 billion in wired and wireless networks, included \$78 billion last year. Ultra-high speed gigabit networks are being rolled out across the country, and while other countries are just beginning to deploy 4G wireless networks at scale, more than 98 percent of Americans have access to LTE mobile broadband.

Earlier this year, the FCC adopted strong net neutrality protections to preserve the Internet as an open platform, where innovators and entrepreneurs can develop new healthcare innovations without having to ask anyone's permission.

But an open Internet and faster networks are not sufficient to assure the development and widespread adoption of digital health solutions. We at the FCC must stay engaged with providers and the healthcare system but also consumers, caregivers, and other key stakeholders in the health space so that we can best understand all the challenges that must be overcome, the infrastructure needs that exist, and, most importantly, the opportunities that broadband might be able to support in the health space.

As has been the case in other sectors, it may be that within the health sector those who stay on top will be the ones who embrace the change and, in some cases, even help to lead the innovation. Today, I would like to engage you in a discussion on how can your industry stay on top and what these changes may mean for your consumers.

As a former investor, I understand that capital, financing, privacy, and security are key issues that must be addressed before new digital solutions are widely deployed. But what about issues beyond these? This is where I would like to focus and hear your perspectives today.

Doctors led the way in the adoption of the new telephone network more than a century ago. I expect leaders of the healthcare industry to step up once more and embrace the potential of our new broadband networks to be higher-quality, more efficient, cost-effective care to more Americans.

Thank you, and I look forward to today's discussion.