

**Remarks of FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler
M-Enabling Summit
June 13, 2016
Renaissance Arlington Capital View Hotel
Arlington, Va.**

Thank you, Karen, for that introduction. I also want to acknowledge your leadership on disability and accessibility issues. In addition, I commend Alison Kutler and the CGB team for how they worked creatively, collaboratively, and diligently on this initiative.

I am thrilled to be able to join you at the Fifth Annual M-Enabling Summit. Thank you to the Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies for having me. And thank you to all of you for joining me tonight to be a part of this conversation and to celebrate the advances being made in accessibility.

The Chairman's AAA is an example of how we, the FCC, can promote progress and innovation in the accessibility arena. Our aim tonight is to spotlight and celebrate the efforts of those seeking to produce meaningful real-life impacts for persons with disabilities.

Technology has the ability to either perpetuate inequality or to dismantle it. We are all here because we believe in the power of technology to transform the lives of people with disabilities—it has the potential to provide people with dignity, equal access and equal opportunity.

As Karen mentioned, we've been very busy lately. I'm proud of what we've accomplished this year to extend the benefits of networks to Americans with disabilities. The Commission is committed to ensuring access to wireless mobile devices and other technologies in this ever-changing communications environment.

It is not acceptable to live in a world where products and services are made for the mainstream, with accessibility features incorporated after the fact.

Innovation and accessibility go hand in hand. Why should there be devices intended for use by people with disabilities and others for use by everyone else? Experience has shown that this is an outdated approach. We know this because many of the technologies that were originally designed for people with disabilities are now commonplace—wearable tech, closed captioning, volume control on telephones, and list goes on and on and on.

Today, we celebrate innovators who have helped make communications and technology more accessible to people with disabilities, and in turn moved the ball forward for innovations that will benefit the entire tech landscape.

I was so impressed with the quality of the nominations we received, so I want to commend the work of everyone who made a submission. Seeing what dozens of companies, individual developers, and organizations are working on is encouraging, and more than that—it's inspiring.

Congratulations to all of today's winners. I want to personally thank each of you here today for your interest in and contributions to accessibility and the tremendous impact that each of your efforts will have on so many people.

Your work will mean that millions more Americans can enjoy all of the wonders, big and small, that come with technology. From keeping in touch with friends and family in real time to equipping themselves with the skills and tools to create a new technology of their own. The possibilities truly are endless when accessibility is no longer an afterthought, but a priority.

Thank you to the M-Enabling summit for having me and thank you all for the tremendous work you do.