

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MIGNON L. CLYBURN**

Re: *Improving Outage Reporting for Submarine Cables and Enhanced Submarine Cable Outage Data*, GN Docket No. 15-206, Report and Order.

Few people realize just how vital submarine cables are when it comes to our nation's communications infrastructure. There are approximately 60 licensed undersea cables that connect the U.S. mainland to rest of the world, and today, these cables carry over 95% of all U.S.-international voice and data traffic. Assuring the reliability and resiliency of this critical piece of our communications infrastructure is crucial to our nation's security and economic well-being.

Paramount to that task is putting in place rules that will improve the Commission's situational awareness of the operating status of submarine cables by requiring licensees to report service outages. The reporting structure codified by today's *Order* will enable the Commission to quickly identify troubling system trends and facilitate awareness of possible harmful activity early.

But the rules adopted in the *Order* differ in important respects from those proposed in the underlying NPRM. The Commission, in crafting the final rules, was mindful of the unique attributes of the submarine cable industry, as reflected in the record, and endeavored to provide more flexibility to licensees and reduce reporting burdens.

One important refinement that I thank the Chairman for accepting is an extension of the notification timeline. This *Order* requires the filing of a notification of an outage eight hours from the time a licensee determines that an outage is reportable, as opposed to the two hours proposed in the NPRM, and after a three year period, notifications will be required within four hours of that determination.

These refinements address industry concerns that staffing, time zone considerations, and language barriers would have made the originally proposed timeframe difficult to meet. Nevertheless, it is imperative that the Commission receive notice about outages as soon as practicable, so to the extent licensees are able to provide notifications sooner than eight hours, I encourage them to do so.

Ensuring the reliability and resiliency of submarine cables is fundamental to the Commission's statutory obligation to protect the nation's communications networks, and we all appreciate the important role that the staff of the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau and International Bureau play in fulfilling that mission.