

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Procedures for Commission Review of State-Opt Out Request from the FirstNet Radio Access Network*, PS Docket No. 16-269.

Today, the Commission takes a significant step forward in carrying out its responsibilities to help the First Responder Network Authority, or FirstNet, establish a nationwide, interoperable public safety broadband network. We establish procedures and timelines governing a state's decision to opt out of FirstNet's radio access network, or RAN, and to construct, maintain, and operate a RAN on its own initiative. We also lay out the criteria for evaluating, and ultimately approving or disapproving, any alternative plans from states that elect to opt-out.

We could not have reached this milestone without the leadership of Congress and the efforts of many individuals in both the private and public sectors. From the beginning, the FCC has played a collaborative role to help realize Congress's vision. In the past five years, the Commission has allocated spectrum for use by a nationwide public safety broadband network. It's granted a spectrum license to FirstNet. It's established a technical advisory board for first responder interoperability. It's approved and transmitted technical requirements to FirstNet. And now, with this *Order*, we fulfill our latest statutory responsibility.

This is just one more piece of an overarching and ongoing plan to ensure that when the next disaster strikes, our first responders in the field—our call center dispatchers, EMTs, police officers, and firemen—will have the tools they need to save lives.

I would like to thank David Furth, Behzad Ghaffari, Brian Marenco, Roberto Mussenden, Erika Olsen, and Rasoul Safavian from the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau and Keith McCrickard and Bill Richardson from the Office of General Counsel for their continued efforts to help our nation's first responders protect the public.