

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MIGNON. L CLYBURN**

Re: *Accelerating Wireless Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment*, WT Docket No. 17-79

Next generation wireless innovation deserves next generation infrastructure policy, but success calls for regulatory approaches that promote collaboration among relevant stakeholders. Federal agencies, state and local governments, Tribal nations, wireless and tower companies, are all integral in meeting and implementing those sought-after policy objectives.

Earlier this year, my office released a #Solutions2020 Call to Action Plan, which outlined several recommendations making the case for much needed collaboration. They include:

- Stakeholder committees that embrace upcoming construction and build-out opportunities;
- Encouraging public-private, public-public, and private-private partnerships on both the supply and demand side, to help solve different pieces of the infrastructure puzzle and aggregate demand for services where the economic case for buildout is weaker.
- Ensuring transparency on both sides of the table and an effective complaint process;
- Creating capacity for permitting and make ready work;
- Making municipal assets such as fiber, light and power poles, available on nondiscriminatory and attractive terms; and
- Creating a broadband ready building stock by integrating future looking broadband practices into development plans for residential and commercial real estate.

During my office's ex parte meetings on this item, tower and wireless companies recommended broader replacement pole proposals that embraced a number of these elements. For those parties, this Order may seem like a modest first step, but I support the replacement utility pole rules adopted today because, for the most part, we followed the proper collaborative approach.

In our initial draft, we identified a few criteria that would exempt replacement utility poles from the historic preservation review process, but industry proposed sensible changes to the location and height criteria. They include exempting replacement utility poles if they are sited in new holes within 10 feet of the original pole, provided that doing so does not result in new ground disturbance and if the heights of replacement poles are no more than 10 percent taller than the poles they replace. Then the staff reached out to the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation for its approval, and while the record is less clear on how much coordination our staff had with Tribal representatives, the infrastructure issues we will face in the future are likely to be more difficult than the one we address today. So, it is critical that we set the stage now for robust coordination with all relevant stakeholders, including Tribal representatives.

It was a pleasure working with Commissioner Carr and my colleagues on this wireless infrastructure reform effort, and I wish to thank the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau for their work on this item.