

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Accelerating Wireline Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment*, WC Docket No. 17-84.

To close the digital divide, we need to make it easier for providers to deploy high-speed networks. But for years, FCC rules have stood in the way of providers delivering advanced services to communities across the country. So I am pleased that today's item takes concrete steps to reduce these regulatory burdens while ensuring that consumers remain protected.

These actions will make a real difference, particularly for those living in rural and less densely populated parts of the country—areas that might otherwise miss out on advanced wireline deployments. In fact, one study shows that through streamlining alone, the FCC can flip the business case for thousands of communities. Regulatory reforms could make it economical for the private sector to deploy fiber to 26.7 million more homes than under the existing regime. That's an additional \$45.3 billion in private sector investment that could be incentivized simply by removing regulatory barriers to deployment.

Today's Order implements many of those important reforms. For instance, by simplifying the notice rules for copper retirement and by reducing the waiting period to 90 days, we enable carriers to more quickly and cost effectively transition consumers to fiber networks. In addition, the Order will help mitigate the impact of natural disasters, such as hurricanes, by encouraging the timely restoration of communications services for consumers. We also support the deployment of next generation networks by shortening the timeframes for carriers to discontinue low-speed legacy services and providing clarity as to when FCC authorization is required by eliminating the misguided "functional test."

I also appreciate my colleagues' willingness to incorporate edits into the Further Notice so that we now propose to codify our existing precedent that permits overlashing as of right. Codifying this approach could help drive fiber deployments deeper into the network without the need for costly and time-consuming regulatory approvals.

While somewhat in the weeds, these are all important steps that will make it easier for consumers to benefit from next-generation deployments. So the Order has my support. Thanks to the staff of the Wireline Competition Bureau for your hard work on this item.