

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Establishment of the Office of Economics and Analytics*, MD Docket No. 18-3.

Today's *Order* might be the most important two and a half page decision the FCC has issued. Last year, FCC leadership announced a renewed commitment to the role that economic analysis should play in our decision-making. We are now codifying that commitment by establishing an Office of Economics and Analytics ("OEA") here at the Commission.

This decision follows the recommendations outlined by a staff working group, which first convened nine months ago. That group conducted at least 80 interviews with a broad range of stakeholders—both within and outside the FCC—and held meetings with every FCC bureau and office that has an economist. Their research found that FCC economists are not uniformly incorporated into our decision-making, do not have regular opportunities to offer their opinions on policy matters, and have limited opportunities to collaborate with their peers. These structural failings only make it more difficult for us to reach decisions that further the public interest.

Establishing OEA will help correct these shortcomings. It will ensure that the agency's first-rate economists have a seat at the table and a voice that will be heard. In fact, my vision is that OEA will play a role similar to the agency's Office of General Counsel ("OGC"). While the agency's operating bureaus may be driving towards particular policy outcomes, OGC functions as the legal conscience of the agency. As a separate office, it enjoys independence from the Commission's policy shops, the chance to develop a specialized body of expertise, and a clearly defined role in our decision-making process. There is no doubt that OGC's feedback ultimately improves and strengthens every agency decision. OEA will soon be empowered to play a similar role, serving as the FCC's economic gut check.

In addition to enhancing the role that economics will play, I also support the decision to move the Auctions Divisions from the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau ("WTB") into OEA. While it used to make sense to house the auctions team in WTB, given the important role that spectrum auctions play at the agency, we are now increasing our reliance on auctions outside the traditional context of spectrum, including in the upcoming CAF II proceeding. So it only make sense to incorporate this group of talented professionals into the new office.

The decision to bring even greater economic rigor to agency decision-making is one that draws on a long, bipartisan tradition. From President Clinton to President Trump, Administrations have consistently called for enhancing the role that economic analysis plays in regulatory proceedings. Indeed, former FCC Chairman Genachowski called on the FCC to increase its reliance on economics seven years ago. So I am pleased that we are moving forward with this idea today.

I want to thank Wayne Leighton, who served as the Team Leader of the agency's working group, as well as Mindy Ginsburg, Sasha Javid, Jay Schwarz, Royce Sherlock, Walt Strack, and Rodger Woock for their service and contribution to that body. This item has my full support.