

**Remarks of Commissioner Mignon Clyburn**  
Consumer Advisory Committee  
Washington, D.C.  
February 26, 2018

Good morning, everyone! I want to begin by not only thanking the members of the Consumer Advisory Committee for your service, but also for highlighting public safety in today's agenda.

My approach when it comes to public safety issues, has been shaped by three, key guiding principles: people with accessibility and access challenges must benefit; we should do all we can to educate every consumer about these safety benefits; and collaboration among all stakeholders works better than litigation. The first two principles, you may note, are at the core of this Committee's mission.

Since September 2017, the FCC has addressed several public safety issues in a largely bipartisan fashion. It has adopted rules to implement two important Congressional directives. The first, to facilitate the nationwide dissemination of information when a law enforcement officer is seriously injured, killed or missing in the line of duty, was the adoption of the three-character code BLU, as a new EAS event code to enable the delivery of Blue Alerts over the Emergency Alert System and Wireless Emergency Alerts or WEAs. And last month, the Commission took another step to improve the WEA system, by following through on the previous administration's enhanced geo-targeting proposal and establishing a deadline that requires the industry to meet the enhanced standard by November 30, 2019.

Three hurricanes devastated communities in Texas, Florida, the United States Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico and I again commend the staff of the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau for their rapid response. They jumped into action by dispatching personnel and resources to ensure state and local governments had all the help the FCC could offer to protect their citizens and restore vital communications services.

But the wireless service outages we witnessed during those disasters indicate that the Commission may need to do more. According to the Commission's network outage reports, five days after the Hurricane Maria's landfall on September 16, 2017, 95.2% of cell sites remained out of service. All counties in Puerto Rico had greater than 75% cell sites outages and 48 out of the 78 counties in Puerto Rico had 100% of their cell sites out of service. Those levels were the worse than any prior Hurricane outage reports including Katrina, and Superstorm Sandy.

Since Hurricane Katrina struck in 2007, the Commission has been studying ways to improve the resiliency of commercial wireless networks. In 2016, we opted to monitor a voluntary CTIA led initiative which sought to improve coordination among wireless carriers, state and local governments, and consumers, in preparation for outages that result from natural disasters. I believe it is now time for the agency to revisit this issue and a great place to start would be with the CAC working with the agency's Hurricane Task Force on lessons learned from the outages we saw during Hurricanes Maria, Irma, and Harvey.

Related to the Commission's work on public safety, I would also like to highlight a Commission initiative, focused on bridging the broadband health divide. Our Connect2Health Task Force, which launched in 2014 at my urging, and thanks to Chairman Pai has continued, focuses on examining the intersection of broadband, advanced technology, and health.

Last December, the Commission entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Cancer Institute that will focus on how increasing broadband access and adoption in rural areas, can improve outcomes of rural cancer patients. As an inaugural project, the agencies have convened a public-private collaboration to help bridge the broadband health connectivity gap in Appalachia, taking another concrete step toward closing the digital and opportunities divide.

Again, thank you for allowing me to share a few words with you this morning and if time permits, I look forward to answering your questions or listening to your concerns.