

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Auctions of Upper Microwave Flexible Use Licenses for Next-Generation Wireless Services*, AU Docket No. 18-85, Public Notice (August 2, 2018)

It has been 25 years since the Federal Communications Commission was granted auction authority. In that quarter of a century, this agency has held nearly 90 auctions, issued more than 44,000 licenses, and raised more than \$114 billion for the United States Treasury. More recently, we blazed a trail for incentive auctions by testing the proposition that existing spectrum licensees might voluntarily relinquish their rights in exchange for a portion of the proceeds from the subsequent reauction of their airwaves for new flexible use. As a result, our efforts have been a model for regulators worldwide.

Today, we tackle another frontier with our first-ever auction of high-band spectrum dedicated to the deployment of 5G wireless services. This is exciting. It's another one for the history books—and, as I said back in January, it is imperative that this agency hold an auction this year. I'm glad my colleagues listened. Because it starts right here—with the auctions we announce in this Public Notice.

However, it is time to recognize something fundamental—our auction playbook needs an update for the 5G era. The power of this distributive tool in the future requires that we do more today than simply rely on the tools of auctions past. That's because as our national providers grow bigger and fewer in number, the success of our future auctions depends on growing a new class of spectrum interests that can join the ranks of those who bid on airwaves and come up with innovative new ways to use them.

Moreover, I believe a few of our key decisions today rest a little too comfortably on the auction practices of the past.

Let me explain. To prepare for this auction, we sought comment on how to schedule filing windows for the 28 and 24 GHz auctions. The record was unanimous. Every commenter told us not to schedule concurrent filing windows. And yet, today we do just that.

We also sought comment on the timing of our actions. Again, the record was clear. Commenter after commenter told us that including the 37, 39, and 47 GHz bands in the 24 GHz auction would minimize bidder risk and increase the likelihood of auction success. They cautioned us not to auction the 24 GHz band on its own. And yet, today we do just that.

In addition, we heard from parties about the urgency of mid-band spectrum opportunities. Commenters of all stripes suggest moving ahead now is key, as mid-band spectrum auctions are already happening abroad and the United States risks falling behind. And yet, we are haphazardly scheduling high-band auctions without a full public calendar and a clear plan to auction mid-band spectrum.

Going forward we should be bold. We should be willing to divert from the stale practices of the past and develop auction policies that take into full account the spectrum realities of the present. In some respects today's decision does that, yet in others it simply does not. But because it does the most important thing for our future spectrum success—it gets an auction started—I will offer my support.