

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Accelerating Wireline Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment*, WT Docket No. 17-84; *Accelerating Wireless Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment*, WT Docket No. 17-79.

The first utility poles in the country went up not far from here back in 1844. They formed a 38-mile line between the U.S. Capitol and the Mount Clare railroad station in Baltimore, Maryland. The poles went up along the right-of-way used by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The idea came from an engineer, Ezra Cornell, who had been working with Samuel Morse on a way to quickly and efficiently string a telegraph line between the two points. With the poles and wire line in place, Morse and his partner Alfred Vail were able to send the world's first long-distance telegram on May 24, 1844.

So the humble utility pole is one of the oldest forms of infrastructure used for communications. And it is that same utility pole that will support the next-gen networks of tomorrow. Take 5G – we need thousands of new small cell deployments over the next few years. And the lion's share of these are expected to go up on utility poles in rights-of-ways. You can already see the leading edge of these deployments in communities across the country. I have seen it in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, where city officials showed me some of the small cells that have gone up across their downtown. I have seen it on top of a wooden pole outside a high school in rural Woodstock, Virginia, where a small cell is adding the capacity needed to power students' coding classes and cloud-based learning.

At the FCC, we have been working to streamline and reduce barriers to these small cell deployments. And today's decision is another good step in that direction. By making it easier for providers to safely and efficiently attach broadband-capable fiber and cable lines to utility poles, we can bring down the cost of the backhaul needed to connect all these small cell deployments.

In this decision, we also take the commonsense step of repeating our long-standing view that moratoria on telecom deployments violate federal law. This decision will provide even greater certainty as we look to promote next-gen deployments in communities across the country.

I want to thank the Wireline Competition Bureau and the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau in particular for their work on this item. It has my support.