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For Immediate Release

CHAIRMAN PAI APPOINTS NIRALI PATEL AS WIRELINE ADVISOR

WASHINGTON, October 16, 2018—Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai announced that his special counsel, Nirali Patel, will now serve as his wireline advisor. Ms. Patel replaces Dr. Jay Schwarz, who is returning to the FCC’s Office of Strategic Planning & Policy Analysis. In addition, Preston Wise is joining the Office of Chairman Pai as an acting special counsel.

“I’m grateful that Nirali has agreed to take on this vital role,” said Chairman Pai. “She’s done an outstanding job in my office as a special counsel handling complicated issues like the LNPA transition, and I look forward to our continued work together.”

Prior to joining Chairman Pai’s office in January 2018, Ms. Patel served as a legal advisor to FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr and as a deputy chief in the Competition Policy Division of the Wireline Competition Bureau. Before joining the Commission, Ms. Patel worked in private practice at Hogan Lovells US LLP, Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP, and Sidley Austin LLP. Ms. Patel graduated summa cum laude from the American University Washington College of Law and received her undergraduate degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Chairman Pai also thanked Dr. Schwarz for his work: “Jay has been an integral part of our work since January 2017 and an outstanding member of our team. I thank him for his numerous contributions – and for his commitment to bringing his economics expertise to bear on the Commission’s work. From traveling the Pacific Northwest with me, to putting up with good-natured teasing about having a Ph.D. rather than a J.D., Jay also brought a wonderful character to our team to go along with his sharp economic and policy mind.”

Dr. Schwarz holds a Ph.D. in Economics and a B.S. and M.Eng. in Civil Engineering. In addition to his work in the Chairman’s Office and the Office of Strategic Planning & Policy Analysis, he has served as deputy chief in the Wireline Competition Bureau’s Telecommunications Access Policy Division and supervisory economist in the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau’s Competition and Infrastructure Policy Division. He has also co-authored peer reviewed telecommunications research, received the FCC’s 2014 Excellence in Economics award, and taught graduate courses in Cost-Benefit Analysis and Microeconomics at the Johns Hopkins University.

The Chairman also welcomed Preston Wise to the Office of the Chairman as acting special counsel: “Preston is a very talented attorney and will be a wonderful addition to our office. I thank him for agreeing to join our team.”

Mr. Wise joins the Chairman’s Office from the Wireline Competition Bureau, where he has served as an attorney-advisor in the Telecommunications Access Policy Division. Prior to

joining the Commission in January 2017, he worked as an attorney for Smith Porsborg Schweigert Armstrong Moldenhauer & Smith in Bismarck, North Dakota. He earned his J.D. from the Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University and his B.S. in Economics from North Dakota State University.

The wireline advisor advises the Chairman on issues primarily covered by the Wireline Competition Bureau. The advisor and Bureau staff help lead the agency's work on Chairman Pai's top policy priority of closing the digital divide. They also work to protect consumers, foster competition, enforce FCC rules, and ensure that all Americans have access to robust, affordable broadband and voice services.

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