

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Unlicensed Use of the 6 GHz Band, ET Docket No. 18-295; Expanding Flexible Use in Mid-Band Spectrum Between 3.7 and 24 GHz, GN Docket No. 17-183.*

Drop it like it's hot ... spot.

Abraham Linksys.

John Wilkes Bluetooth.

Wu-Tang LAN.

Pretty Fly for a Wi-Fi.

These are some of the more creative (or at least punny) names you might see when searching for a Wi-Fi connection. And the sheer number of network names that pop up confirms what the data tell us. Your neighbors, your family, and nearby businesses are all competing for a relatively limited amount of unlicensed spectrum. And those spectrum bands are getting congested.

After all, Wi-Fi networks are the workhorses of our connected lives. We hear so much in telecom about the difficulty of connecting the “last mile.” And when we are at home or at work the final few feet of that last mile are often spanned by Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, or another unlicensed technology. Few realize that without Wi-Fi and the unlicensed spectrum it uses, even the best commercial wireless networks would strain to keep up with consumer demand. In fact, a study out last week shows that even among Americans with unlimited mobile data plans, two-thirds of their data still rides on Wi-Fi.

And it's surprising that so much is done with so little. The 2.4 GHz band is home to some of the original Wi-Fi devices, cordless phones, baby monitors, and Bluetooth devices that came to market nearly 20 years ago. Two decades of devices send and receive information over just 83 MHz of spectrum in that band. The 5 GHz band, which is used to transmit at a faster rate and to relieve congestion in 2.4, adds only 150 MHz.

As we move towards 5G, demand on our unlicensed bands will only increase. From the Internet of Things to smart ag to new telehealth applications, we need more spectrum to connect billions of new devices to the Internet. That's why today's proceeding is so important. It proposes to add 1,200 MHz of prime mid-band spectrum for unlicensed use—that's five times the spectrum available today in the 2.4 and 5 GHz bands.

There are issues to be resolved in this proceeding, for sure. Would unlicensed use in the 6 GHz band cause harmful interference to incumbents? If so, how could we tailor protections that maximize use of the band? These are technical issues that require the input and engagement of all stakeholders. So I encourage parties to work with the Commission to develop appropriate rules. And we need to do so expeditiously. Few predicted how important the 2.4 and 5 GHz bands would be to the modern world when the FCC made them available more than 30 years ago. That history suggests the enormous potential value of the steps we take today.

So I want to thank the Office of Engineering and Technology and the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau for their work on this item. It has my support.