

**REMARKS BY FCC CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI  
AT THE WOMEN IN CABLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY PRESS CONFERENCE**

**WASHINGTON, DC**

**MARCH 4, 2019**

Good afternoon! It's great to be here. I have to mention that during a WICT event a few years ago, I had the pleasure of meeting a star of *Suits*, one Meghan Markle. It is a testament to the power of WICT that you singlehandedly propelled her to become a transatlantic star. I don't see the Duchess of Sussex in attendance here today, but more importantly to me, I do see the royalty among women in cable in the room. (I'm here all week!)

I'm honored to be joined by my colleague on the Commission, Mike O'Rielly. Also joining us from the FCC is the head of our Media Bureau Michelle Carey. Michelle does an outstanding job, leading a stellar team that features Deputy Chief Sarah Whitesell and Associate Chiefs Hilary DeNigro, Nancy Murphy, and Holly Saurer. Yes, the Chief, Deputy Chief, and all three Associate Chiefs in our Media Bureau are women. Together with Martha Heller, who as chief of the Bureau's policy division runs point on cable issues, some might call the Bureau WICP—Women in Cable Policy.

Thank you to everyone at WICT for welcoming us, including your senior leadership, Marva Johnson and Maria Brennan. It's shaping up to be a great week, because I have not one, but two events with Maria! This Thursday, the FCC is hosting a symposium on media diversity, and Maria has graciously agreed to headline a panel on minority and female entrepreneurship. For the record, we invited Maria first. I'm not sure if my invitation today was a make-up call. Frankly, I don't care. As long as I got invited, I'm happy.

With that in mind, allow me to make a few brief points about why WICT is an important organization whose longevity should be celebrated.

First, WICT opens doors. Noted television writer Nell Scovell has said that the lack of gender diversity in parts of the media and tech sectors is “not a pipeline problem. It's a broken doorbell problem. There's so much talent that's on the doorstep ringing the bell. And no one's opening the door.” For 40 years, you've been working to fix that doorbell in the cable industry.

Second, WICT develops talent. A lot of people may get a foot in the door. But they may not know how to walk all the way in, even with a lot of hard work and aptitude. WICT's work to create mentoring opportunities helps women turn potential into power.

Third, WICT creates role models. When you open doors for women in the cable industry, and then enable their talents to shine so they can rise to leadership positions, it has a ripple effect far beyond the careers of the women you touch directly. When talented young women see people who look like themselves holding senior positions in the cable business, they are more likely to see those jobs as a possibility for themselves.

My final point flows from a line by one of the greatest female characters ever on cable—*Mad Men's* Peggy Olson. During a job interview, a male candidate for a writing position once disrespected Peggy, assuming she was a secretary. Peggy replied simply and accurately: “I am the person you need to impress right now.” Like Peggy Olson, WICT demands our attention and deserves our respect. For four decades, you have empowered women in the cable industry and the sector is better for it. Congratulations on your 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Here's to many more.

Oh, and a personal request: if any of you have inside scoop on whether Daenerys Targaryen takes the Iron Throne over the next few months, please don't tell me.