

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Allocation and Service Rules for the 1675-1680 MHz Band*, WT Docket No. 19-116

Today's rulemaking begins a proceeding to make a bit of spectrum in the 1675-1680 MHz band available for shared use. This will take place only after the completion of a government study and an auction that is not scheduled. The issues associated with this five megahertz block of spectrum have been kicking around these halls for more than five years, so this rulemaking has my support.

But I am afraid this small step involving a small block of mid-band spectrum does not change a big truth. The United States has a mid-band spectrum problem. Over the past two years this agency has flooded private markets with high-band airwaves. But this country is increasingly alone in its mission to make millimeter wave spectrum the core of its domestic 5G approach. This means we have internationally ceded leadership when it comes to mid-band airwaves. If you want evidence this is true it is all around us. Start with South Korea, which last year wrapped up an auction of the 3.5 GHz band. At roughly the same time Spain and Italy held auctions for the 3.6-3.8 GHz bands. Austria did the same with similar airwaves earlier this year. Switzerland, Germany, and Japan also have auctioned a range of mid-band spectrum just a few months ago. Meanwhile, China has already allocated 300 megahertz of mid-band spectrum for next generation mobile use. In the United States, we have made available zero.

This is a problem. If we continue our current path prioritizing millimeter wave we may find ourselves without a global supply base as mid-band becomes the core of worldwide 5G service. This means less scale, higher costs, interoperability challenges, and less security as other nations' technologies proliferate. Moreover, recent commercial launches of 5G service are confirming what we already know—that commercializing millimeter wave is not easy, given its propagation challenges. The network densification these airwaves require is costly and in fact, may never reach rural America.

It's time for the United States to flip its wireless priorities and pivot to mid-band spectrum. These airwaves offer the mix of capacity and coverage we need for 5G to ever be deployed nationwide. This means scheduling an auction of the 3.5 GHz band and developing auction rules. It means moving faster on a plan for the 3.7-4.2 GHz band. We should explore innovative opportunities for making more efficient use of the 2.5 GHz band. Plus, we need to press our federal partners to work collaboratively with us to open more mid-band spectrum for new commercial use. But above all, we need to recognize what we do here today with a discrete five megahertz of mid-band spectrum is not enough. Our national leadership is at stake and it's time to pivot our priorities so that next generation wireless service can truly reach every community across the country.