STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI

Re: *Amendment of the Commission's Rules to Promote Aviation Safety,* WT Docket No. 19-140; *WiMAX Forum Petition to Adopt Service Rules for the Aeronautical Mobile Airport Communications System (AeroMACS),* RM-11793; *Petition of Sierra Nevada Corporation for Amendment of the Commission's Rules to Allow for Enhanced Flight Vision System Radar under Part 87,* RM-11799; *Petition of Aviation Spectrum Resources, Inc. for Amendment of Sections 87.173(b) and 87.263(a) of the FCC's Rules to Allow Use of the Lower 136 MHz Band by Aeronautical Enroute Stations,* RM-11818; *Petition of Airports Council International-North America Regarding Aeronautical Utility Mobile Stations,* RM-11832

This summer, I'll join millions of Americans in boarding an airplane to reach my destination. Some might take for granted that flights will be safe. But not me—in part because I know a lot of work goes into ensuring that thousands of flights take-off and land smoothly in our country every single day.

A critical aspect of aviation safety is provided by wireless communications, and that's where the FCC comes in. The Commission's Aviation Radio Service uses dedicated spectrum for aviation communications. These services enable aircraft and ground services to coordinate important safety functions, like guiding aircraft take-off and landing, routing aircraft on the ground and in the air, helping pilots avoid obstacles, and contacting search and rescue authorities in the event of an accident.

I've often said that it's important for the Commission to update its rules to reflect current technological and marketplace realities. And that's certainly true when it comes to rules impacting aviation safety. We want our aviation system to benefit from cutting-edge technologies in order to ensure that Americans are safe, whether in the air or on the ground at an airport. So today, we kickstart the process to modernize our Aviation Radio Service rules to enable the use of today's state-of-the-art safety-enhancing technologies. For example, we propose to allocate spectrum and establish service rules for Enhanced Flight Vision System radar to enhance pilots' detection of objects in degraded visual environments, such as fog. Admittedly, many of the changes we propose are very technical and involve things like vehicle squitters, Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast, and unicom stations. They may not be familiar to the flying public, but they'll be appreciated nonetheless by everyone who'll spend time in the air in the years to come.

I look forward to reviewing the responses from our commenters and working with my colleagues and the Commission's talented staff on bringing this proceeding in for a landing. From the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, I'd like to thank Stephen Buenzow, Jonathan Campbell, Linda Chang, Jennifer Flynn, Garnet Hanly, Stanislava Kimball, Tim Maguire, Charles Mathias, Roger Noel, John Schauble, Becky Schwartz, Blaise Scinto, Dana Shaffer, Jiaming Shang, Scot Stone, Cecilia Sulhoff, Suzanne Tetreault, Jeff Tobias, and Rebecca Williams; from the Enforcement Bureau, Charles Cooper, Shannon Lipp, Jeremy Marcus, and Elizabeth Mumaw; from the International Bureau, Karl Kensinger; from the Office of Communications Business Opportunities, Chana Wilkerson and Sanford Williams; from the Office of Economics and Analytics, Judith Dempsey, Catherine Matraves, Giulia McHenry, and Emily Talaga; from the Office of Engineering and Technology, Rashmi Doshi, Michael Ha, John Kennedy, Tom Mooring, Nicholas Oros, Aspasia Paroutsas, and Jamison Prime; from the Office of General Counsel, David Horowitz, Thomas Johnson, Douglas Klein, and Bill Richardson; and from the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, David Furth.