

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Modernizing Unbundling and Resale Requirements in an Era of Next-Generation Networks and Services*, WC Docket No. 19-308.

It's not always easy to keep up with the latest trends. At this agency, we have to keep up with both technology and market evolutions – from copper to fiber, and from plain-old-telephone-service to 5G mobile broadband. And today, we're taking a major step in the right direction. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 has in many ways been a great success. It took a monopolized industry and planted the seeds for what could become—and now is—a dynamic, competitive free market.

The unbundled network elements at the heart of the 1996 reforms were a stepping stone for new carriers to enter a market that previously enjoyed high and government-imposed barriers to entry. It took heavy-handed regulation to enable scrappy new entrants to compete with entrenched monopolists. We're now 20 plus years removed from those monopoly days—more than a few lifetimes in technology. And by all measures Americans are now benefiting from world-leading investments in competing networks.

The secret to the American success story in telecom has been our commitment to facilities-based competition and light-touch regulation. And for free markets to flourish, we need to let go of heavy-handed regulations when they have outlived whatever original purpose they served. Otherwise, rules designed to encourage investment and buildout will hit a tipping point and start depressing those incentives. To that end, we have already eliminated the mandatory unbundling obligations that skewed investment and deterred buildout, and we have allowed providers from previously siloed segments of the market to compete against each other – cable, telcos, wireless providers, satellite providers, and WISPs are now all investing in their networks to compete and win subscribers from each other.

Indeed, we know that America's commitment to facilities-based competition pays off. A study comparing broadband investment in the U.S. and Europe showed that American carriers invested twice as much per person as their European counterparts and paved the way for new forms of competition.

Today we're choosing to continue this successful, light touch approach that has served us so well over the years. We do so by proposing to eliminate certain unbundling obligations that may have outlived their usefulness while recognizing that some unbundling obligations may continue to benefit the public interest.

Thank you to the Wireline Competition Bureau for your hard work on this item. It has my support.