

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *All-Digital AM Broadcasting*, MB Docket No. 19-311; *Revitalization of the AM Radio Service*, MB Docket No. 13-249.

It's been almost 100 years since the first licensed AM broadcast. If you have recently tuned to the AM dial on your radio, it might feel like you were transported back in time . . . but not in a good way. Far from being greeted by nostalgia, you likely encountered sound quality that belongs on a vintage RCA Victor radio, not an HD Radio. With all the advancements in radio and sound technology, the FCC's technical rules have kept AM radio stuck in the past. And that doesn't have to be the case.

Broadcasters should have the freedom to innovate without government mandate or permission. Today's proposal is a step in the right direction, as it provides AM broadcasters with a voluntary way forward to better serve their communities. AM broadcasters occupy a special place in communications history and continue to serve the listening public in communities all throughout the country. These stations often tailor their programming to underserved populations and can provide an entry point for diverse station owners. That is why it is critical that we allow these stations to innovate and remain relevant in the modern media marketplace.

While the FCC has authorized what is known as hybrid digital operation since 2002, AM stations have not embraced that option. And the record in this proceeding suggests that allowing stations to go all digital might increase the pace of AM's digital upgrade.

Finally, I want to recognize the FCC staff working to modernize our AM broadcasting rules. For those of you who have ventured into the pages of this item, you can appreciate the complexity of this voluntary transition and the many technical areas that need to be addressed. There is still more work to be done, but I have faith that the Media Bureau is up to the task.

So I want to thank the Media Bureau for its work on the item. It has my support.