

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Structure and Practices of the Video Relay Service Program*, CG Docket No. 10-51;
Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities, CG Docket No. 03-123

We have a special duty at the FCC to make sure that communications technologies are available to every American. We also have a duty to make sure that the programs supporting accessible technologies and services are sustainable. And that certainly applies to our VRS program, which supports translator-assisted video calls. Back in 2011, we prohibited those communications assistants from working at home, out of a concern that it could result in VRS fraud, or threaten call quality and confidentiality. But two years ago we stood up a pilot program to see if those concerns were warranted.

The pilot program allowed communications assistants to work from home, and it demonstrated that as long as we implement prudent safeguards to prevent fraud and maintain service quality, we can greatly improve the program for both users and employees of VRS providers. While providers' call centers are in a few fixed locations, qualified communications assistants are spread throughout the country. By allowing more qualified people to enter these jobs, we can greatly expand the pool of prospective workers, foster greater competition among providers, and thus improve the quality of services for consumers.

So I want to thank the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau for their work on this item. It has my support.