

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS**

Re: *Cable Service Change Notifications*, MB Docket No. 19-347; *Modernization of Media Regulation Initiative*, MB Docket No. 17-105; *Amendment of the Commission's Rules Related to Retransmission Consent*, MB Docket No. 10-71.

As I noted at the NPRM stage, protecting consumers is a responsibility that I take very seriously. The impact on consumers' access to the services they pay for—and to their pocketbooks—can be significant if they do not receive adequate notice of failing contract negotiations that ultimately result in surprise service changes and television channel blackouts. I expressed concern about modifying the notice requirement from 30 days in advance of contract expiration to “as soon as possible,” and stated that I would review the record closely to ensure that our ultimate decision would put consumers front and center. Commenters in the record describe how these negotiations can come down to the last days or even the last hours before a contract is due to expire, and that in most instances agreements are reached and service disruptions are avoided. When that happens, 30 days' notice may cause unnecessary confusion, prompting some consumers to prematurely seek to switch providers only to find out the negotiations were ultimately successful. I will be watching to make sure that the changes we adopt today will, in fact, protect consumers through notice provided “as soon as possible.”

I appreciate the work of the Media Bureau staff on this item.