

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Video Description: Implementation of the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010*, MB Docket No. 11-43.

This month, we are celebrating the 10th anniversary of the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA). Earlier in October, at an event the FCC held to mark the occasion, I observed that we should commemorate this anniversary not only with words, but with deeds. We meet that mark here.

The CVAA has improved the lives of many blind and visually impaired Americans by providing them access to television programming through audio description. Audio description involves a narrator describing a program's visual elements during pauses in the program's dialogue. (*Spoiler alert*: For example, this is how the nursing home scene is audio described in the Season 4 finale of *Breaking Bad*: "Gus steps out of the room. He pauses and fixes his tie. Nurses run up and discover a gaping hole in Gus' face, charred and bloody exposed flesh, and a garish empty eye socket on the right side of his face. Gus collapses." *End spoilers*.) Currently, the Commission's regulations require major television broadcasters in the nation's top 60 television markets to provide a certain amount of audio described programming. And three years ago, under my leadership, we increased that amount by 75%.

Today, exercising the authority provided to us by the CVAA, we go even further, expanding our rules to require major broadcasters in more markets to provide audio described programming. Specifically, over the next four years, our audio description requirements will cover an additional 10 television markets per year. So, in 2021, our rules will cover television markets 61 to 70. In 2022, our rules will cover markets 71 to 80. And so on, until our nation's top 100 markets are covered by 2024.

I want to thank the Commission staff whose work has helped improve the lives of their fellow Americans: from the Media Bureau, Michelle Carey, Maria Mullarkey, Michael Scurato, Diana Sokolow, and Sarah Whitesell; from the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau's Disability Rights Office, Diane Burstein, Suzy Rosen Singleton, and Will Schell; from the Office of Communications Business Opportunities, Belford Lawson; from the Office of Economics and Analytics, Eugene Kiselev, Kim Makuch, and Andrew Wise; and from the Office of General Counsel, Susan Aaron and David Konczal.