

Media Contact:

Katie Gorscak, (202) 418-2156
katie.gorscak@fcc.gov

For Immediate Release

**FCC REVIEWS ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MEDIA BUREAU AND
INCENTIVE AUCTION TASK FORCE**

WASHINGTON, January 13, 2021—The Federal Communications Commission today heard reports from leaders of the Media Bureau and the Incentive Auction Task Force on their work over the last four years. FCC Chairman Ajit Pai dedicated the entirety of the final meeting of his chairmanship to thanking Commission staff for their exceptional work and joining his colleagues in hearing presentations from Bureau, Office, and Task Force leaders.

Media Bureau

“I welcome this opportunity to showcase the work of the Media Bureau. I want to thank everyone in the Bureau for the hard work they put in daily. They have been unwavering in their dedication and perseverance for the past four years. I am very grateful and proud to be part of the Media Bureau team.”

— Michelle M. Carey, Chief, Media Bureau

The media marketplace is in a period of tremendous change, and trends such as the move to streaming video continued or accelerated during Chairman Pai’s tenure. In response to these changes, the Bureau took many actions to ensure that the Commission’s rules reflected these new realities. Significantly, through the Modernization of Media Regulation Initiative, the Commission adopted 26 orders prepared by the Bureau that eliminated or updated a number of outdated rules, removing regulatory burdens and saving broadcasters, cable, and direct broadcast satellite operators costs and time in complying with their FCC obligations. At the same time, the Bureau promoted rules to foster innovation among broadcasters through the authorization of new technologies including ATSC 3.0, the next-generation broadcast television standard, as well as rules permitting AM radio stations to voluntarily transition to all-digital operations. The Bureau also worked to modernize the Commission’s media ownership rules and promote diversity by establishing an innovative incubator program and working with the re-chartered Advisory Committee on Diversity and Digital Empowerment. Next week, the U.S. Supreme Court will hold oral arguments to consider both the Commission’s revised media ownership rules and the incubator program. In addition to these major efforts, the Bureau was vigilant in ensuring compliance with the Commission’s rules and reviewed several major media transactions.

Incentive Auction Task Force

“Thanks to dedicated staff from Bureaus and Offices across the Commission and a strong partnership with industry, the Incentive Auction Task Force was able to deliver on the promise of the first ever spectrum incentive auction by clearing 84 MHz of spectrum in a 39-month transition period. For four years, our dedicated staff have done everything humanly possible

to find practical solutions to daunting scheduling challenges ranging from engineering and resource issues to a global pandemic.”

– Jean Kiddoo, Chair, Incentive Auction Task Force

The Task Force’s presentation to the Commissioners summarized the team’s accomplishments in the aftermath of the first ever spectrum incentive auction. Fifty wireless winner bidders were granted 2,775 licenses, and 600 MHz spectrum has already been deployed to provide 5G service across a large swathe of the nation. Repacked broadcast television stations vacated 987 pre-auction channels after constructing and moving to new facilities, and all spectrum in the 600 MHz band was cleared by the end of the 39-month transition period. The Commission has verified \$2.2 billion in estimates for transition costs for repacked stations, displaced LPTV/translator stations, impacted FM stations, and MVPDs, and has already paid over \$1.43 billion on over 93,000 invoices. To assure that over-the-air TV viewers could successfully rescan their TVs and stay connected to the new channels, the Commission’s consumer outreach successfully supported tens of millions of consumers throughout the transition, as witnessed by more than 5.6 million hits on the FCC rescan webpage and the over 116,000 consumers aided by the Commission’s specialized call center.

The presentations, video of this meeting, and Chairman and Commissioner statements will be available and archived at: <https://www.fcc.gov/news-events/events/2021/01/january-2021-open-commission-meeting>.

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Media Relations: (202) 418-0500 / ASL: (844) 432-2275 / Twitter: @FCC / www.fcc.gov

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