

**STATEMENT OF
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *FCC Announces Two New Innovation Zones and Amends One Existing Innovation Zone for Program Experimental Licenses, ET Docket No. 19-257.*

Our 5G future is about connecting everything. It is about moving to a new networked world that will open up possibilities for communications that we cannot even fully imagine today. By exponentially increasing the connections between people and things around us, this technology could become an input in everything we do—improving agriculture, education, healthcare, energy, transportation, and more. In the United States if we want to reap the full benefits of this 5G future, it is essential that we take action to advance our wireless leadership.

We are taking action with our new focus on mid-band spectrum. Last week, we granted more than 5,000 new mid-band licenses in the 3.7-3.98 GHz band. In October, we will kick off another auction of prime mid-band spectrum for 5G in the 3.45-3.55 GHz band. Moving down the spectrum chart, we've granted more than 250 spectrum licenses in the 2.5 GHz band to help address rural Tribal connectivity needs and expect to auction the remaining licenses after we complete the 3.45-3.55 GHz band auction that will start in October.

We are taking action to prioritize 5G security and supply chain trust. We published the first-ever list of communications equipment and services that pose an unacceptable risk to national security. We've prohibited the use of universal service funds to purchase this equipment, and we are targeting late October to launch a program to help carriers replace this equipment to the extent that it is present in their networks today.

We are taking action to support open and interoperable equipment for our 5G wireless world. Earlier this year, we launched the first-ever inquiry exploring how we can accelerate the development and deployment of open radio access networks for 5G, known as Open RAN. We created opportunities for carriers who want to transition to Open RAN as they replace insecure equipment in their networks to do so. Last month, the agency held its first-ever Open RAN Showcase, which gave network operators an opportunity to hear directly from vendors about the capabilities of open, interoperable, and standards-based 5G network equipment.

And we are taking more action today. We are establishing Innovation Zones that will support cutting-edge wireless research and development—including efforts to advance Open RAN.

How does this work? The FCC's experimental licensing rules have long provided a platform for innovation. Experimental licensing allows researchers to develop and test wireless systems without the cost of getting a commercial license. It's a terrific way to foster innovation. But historically researchers have had to apply for an experimental license for each new test they want to run. So research institutions, manufacturers, and other large entities would file to get a program license instead, which authorizes them to conduct a range of experiments within facilities under their control without seeking an individual experimental license for each one.

Innovation Zones take this concept and crank up the possibilities. That's because they are city-scale testbeds that make it possible for anyone with a program license to show up and conduct experiments. They make opportunities for innovation accessible to both large entities and small players. Plus, they make it possible to develop products in real-world environments at a scale no laboratory could provide.

Today we establish two new Innovation Zones. The Boston Innovation Zone, split between two campuses of Northeastern University, will allow for testing in dense urban and suburban environments. It also will support the transition of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency's (DARPA)

Colosseum network emulator to a shared platform, usable by the broader research community. The Raleigh Innovation Zone, in collaboration with North Carolina State University, will house the Aerial Experimentation and Research Platform for Advanced Wireless, which will focus on new use cases and things like developing flying 5G base stations to support wireless connectivity.

But our efforts are not limited to these new zones in Boston and Raleigh. That's because today we also increase the footprint of our existing Innovation Zone in New York City, which supports the Cloud Enhanced Open Software Defined Mobile Wireless Testbed for City-Scale Deployment. This will create more opportunities to explore edge computing and how it can be leveraged for the emerging internet of things.

Taken together, these initiatives will support a range of new innovations and experimentation in next generation ultra-high-bandwidth and low-latency wireless communications. We also are leveraging these testbeds to advance ongoing work to develop Open RAN. Doing this now will help ensure that this technology develops here, on our shores. This, in turn, could mean more competition and security in network equipment for 5G service and beyond. It's a way to turn up the innovation and supercharge competition and vendor diversity in the 5G supply chain.

I'm proud the FCC can do this. I'm also proud that we have collaborated with our federal partners to make it happen. This effort builds on the Spectrum Innovation Initiative Memorandum of Understanding I signed in February with our partners from the National Science Foundation and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. I especially want to thank the National Science Foundation for coordinating these Innovation Zones through its Platforms for Advanced Wireless Research Program.

This is a big deal. History tells us that when you give innovators in the United States sandboxes to test new ideas, good things follow. Here's hoping that creating these Innovation Zones will unlock new breakthroughs in advanced wireless technology and Open RAN. I know I'm excited to see what comes next.

Thank you to the staff working on this all-hands effort, including Martin Doczkat, Michael Ha, Kevin Holmes, Ira Keltz, Jamison Prime, Ron Repasi, Tony Serafini, and Tom Struble from the Office of Engineering and Technology; Linda Chang, Charles Mathias, Roger Noel, and Joel Taubenblatt from the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau; Kate Mataves from the Office of Economics and Analytics; and Debra Broderson and David Horowitz from the Office of General Counsel.