

**STATEMENT OF
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Process Reform for Executive Branch Review of Certain FCC Applications and Petitions Involving Foreign Ownership*, IB Docket No. 16-155

Communications networks have never been simple. But the digital age has multiplied their complexity, increasing our connections around the world. Investment in these new networks now flows at a global scale. In the United States, however, we have long had a framework in the Communications Act to assess foreign investment in our operators and licensees. This framework is smart and puts security interests front and center. But it merits an update for the digital age—and that is exactly what we do today.

The Communications Act has several provisions that specifically limit the percentage of foreign ownership in our operators and licensees. When the Federal Communications Commission assesses transfers of control under these provisions, it also has a duty to ensure that they are in the public interest. In practice, that review entails making sure that foreign ownership does not raise any national security or law enforcement concerns. This is not an effort the agency handles on its own. We work closely with other agencies across government—including the Department of Justice, Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, Department of State, Department of Commerce, as well as the United States Trade Representative—to assess these issues. Together, this group is known as the Committee for the Assessment of Foreign Participation in the United States Telecommunications Sector. That’s a mouthful, so we usually just call it the Committee.

In the past, when we have referred an issue to the Committee, it results in the party before the Commission receiving a long list of questions. Though they may vary depending on the nature of the foreign ownership at issue, responding to them always takes time.

To speed this process up and make it more fair, today we are adopting a set of standard questions for this review. We are posting them on our website so parties before the agency can prepare in advance. This does not mean the Committee’s assessment is any less meticulous or exhaustive. But standardizing up front the basic national security and law enforcement questions like this is the right thing to do. It will help us clear the way for those connections that make us stronger because they help us share our democratic values with the rest of the world while making sure we can root out those applications that may not be in our national security interest.

I want to thank our government partners that are a part of the Committee for working with us to improve this process. I also want to thank Denise Coca, Kate Collins, Kim Cook, Francis Gutierrez, Jocelyn Jeziorny, Leah Kim, David Krech, Arthur Lechtman, Adrienne McNeil, Tom Sullivan, and Troy Tanner from the International Bureau; Pam Arluk, Daniel Kahn, Melissa Kirkel, and Jodie May from the Wireline Competition Bureau; Doug Klein, David Konczal, Joel Rabinovitz, and Bill Richardson from the Office of General Counsel; Christopher Clark, Barbara Kreisman, Evan Morris, Dave Roberts, and Al Shuldiner from the Media Bureau; Jeff Goldthorp and Deb Jordan from the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau; and Maura McGowan and Sanford Williams from the Office of Communications Business Opportunities.