

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS**

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

The importance of effective coordination with the Executive Branch on petitions and applications that will potentially impact national security and law enforcement cannot be overstated. Last year we adopted rules and procedures to facilitate a more streamlined and transparent process for coordinating review of applications involving foreign ownership with the Executive Branch agencies. Today, we take another vital step by adopting a set of standardized questions that certain entities with reportable foreign ownership will be required to answer as part of the national security and law enforcement review process. I am pleased to support this action; not only will it enhance transparency and predictability for parties subject to Executive Branch review, it will also help to streamline the process consistent with the firm timelines mandated in Executive Order 13913 and our rules.

These are complex issues that require effective and efficient coordination to ensure that we best serve the American people. Just last month, the Committee (formerly referred to as “Team Telecom”) requested to review the planned \$15 billion acquisition of Five9, Inc by Zoom Video Communications, Inc. This deal involves the transfer of control of certain common carrier licenses with the FCC and, more importantly, is a stark reminder of the need to work together in a coordinated fashion with the Executive Branch. I appreciate the Committee’s proactive outreach on this transaction, and welcome their expertise to help ensure that here at the FCC, we are well-informed as we reach decisions on applications subject to our review that involve foreign participation.

Finally, I renew my call for the formation of an inter-bureau task force within the Commission to establish a uniform process for reviewing national security issues. We currently review national security issues on a distributed basis among the various bureaus, depending on the subject matter. This distributed structure makes internal coordination challenging and risks inconsistent treatment of national security issues between different bureaus. We need to establish a “whole of the FCC” approach that is more coordinated, more deliberative, and more collaborative.

Thank you to the International Bureau and Commission staff for their work on this important item.