

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRWOMAN JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Expediting Initial Processing of Satellite and Earth Station Applications*, IB Docket No. 22-411;
Space Innovation, IB Docket No. 22-271, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

Telstar 1 was launched into orbit in 1962. It was the world's first communications satellite. It ushered in a new era of connectivity and demonstrated that Federal Communications Commission policies could support privately sponsored space-faring missions. This was big—and a sign in our skies of what was to come.

Because the tremendous growth in the space economy we see right now is also fueled by commercial activity. Space is no longer just the province of our political superpowers. In fact, continued United States leadership in the emerging space economy requires thoughtful collaboration between the public and private sector. In particular, it requires this agency to update its policies to support the expanding range of commercial opportunities in our higher altitudes.

In other words, the new space age needs new rules. If you want further evidence, consider that the number of applications for satellites and gateway earth stations before us has never been higher. They are also more complex. On top of that, we are seeing new applications for novel space activities like lunar landers, space tugs that can deploy other satellites, and space antenna farms that relay communications. In fact, the way constellations are designed, satellites are manufactured, launches are organized, and even how systems are upgraded or replaced are all being re-designed and re-imagined. But the organizational structures at the agency have not kept pace as the applications and proceedings before us have multiplied. And you cannot just keep doing things the old way and expect to lead in the new.

That is why last month I launched an effort to create a new Space Bureau. This re-imagined bureau will help support our leadership in the emerging space economy, promote long-term technical capacity to address satellite policies, and improve our coordination with other agencies here at home and abroad.

But reorganization is just one tool among many that we are using to drive transformational change. Across the board we are working to update our rules, increase staff working on these matters, and speed up the satellite licensing process. Our efforts are already yielding results. In fact, in the past six months, we have reduced our earth station application backlog by more than twenty percent.

The rulemaking we start today will help us build on this momentum. In it, we propose to change the way we process space station and earth station applications. Right now when we receive them, they are supposed to be put on public notice to begin building a record on what has been proposed. But too many applications get bogged down before this critical first step. So we ask about ways to speed up this process and get applications on public notice sooner. We also seek comment on rule changes that would reduce the need for waivers that slow down and complicate review. In addition, we ask about timelines for both satellite and earth station applications and other ways to streamline our processing.

This is just one part of the licensing process, but it matters. Because keeping our rules and our structures at this agency current is how we can support United States leadership in the growing space economy. And on that score, I also want to thank Chairman Pallone and Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers for their leadership on these matters through bipartisan legislation. Working together I know we can foster more of the kind of boundary-breaking innovation that made Telstar 1 possible six decades ago.

Thank you to the staff who have made this latest entry in our space innovation agenda possible, including Clay DeCell, Jennifer Gilsean, Nese Guendelsberger, Karl Kensinger, Kerry Murray, Tom Sullivan, Troy Tanner, and Merissa Velez from the International Bureau; Deborah Broderson, David

Konczal, and William Richardson from the Office of the General Counsel; and Liesl Himmelberger, Marilyn Simon, Don Stockdale, Emily Talaga, and Aleks Yankelevich from the Office of Economics and Analytics.