

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER NATHAN SIMINGTON**

Re: *In the Matter of Single Network Future: Supplemental Coverage from Space, Space Innovation*, GN Docket No. 23-65, IB Docket No. 22-271, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (March 16, 2023)

Today the Commission adopts a proposal for a regulatory framework that allows satellite operators to offer direct-to-handset service, or as the item newly defines it, to provide “supplemental coverage from space” by combining satellite and terrestrial networks to provide service in “remote, unserved and underserved areas.”

This item explores crucial changes to FCC rules that will ensure vital and innovative services are delivered to those who need them most. It is no secret that I am a big fan of the satellite industry and I remain astounded by the rapid growth of the NGSO sector which has brought new and robust competition to the broadband marketplace. NGSO has—in fact—created a seismic shift in how FCC policymakers, Congress and others do and must assess the broadband marketplace as a whole, including how and whether to revamp the subsidy programs available to serve the very areas this service is designed to reach, and whether and how to redefine broadband service as these services come online and begin to proliferate.

As stated so succinctly in a recent article, “There is not a single regulatory framework that addresses mobile cellular devices with satellite capabilities—this unaddressed dichotomy belongs to the past [and] national satellite service licensing frameworks need to be flexible enough to allow for the smartphones of the present, because satellite direct-to-handset connectivity is an industry development that is here to stay.”

That is precisely what this item proposes to do. To wed two regulatory frameworks for a combination that, is at least intended to flexibly address the needs of all providers in this space, *for lack of a better word*. To the extent it doesn’t do that, it seeks comment on what else the FCC should and can do to facilitate these innovative services.

In that sense, this item is the beginning of the discussion about a new regulatory model and the FCC needs industry and others to tell us how to get it right. And so I look forward to a fulsome record. That said, in the meantime I do not want to see this proceeding get in the way of the FCC approving the waiver applications of providers who have sought permission to launch direct-to-handset services right now. The FCC must ensure those waiver applications move forward at a rapid clip to avoid thwarting business plans and future innovation.

I’d like to thank the staff of the wireless and international bureaus for their hard work on this item. It has my support.

Thank you.