

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN MICHAEL K. POWELL**

*Re: Implementation of Section 6002(b) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993;
Annual Report and Analysis of Competitive Market Conditions With Respect to Commercial
Mobile Services, Ninth Report*

Today's *Ninth Report* highlights that U.S. consumers continue to benefit from robust competition in the CMRS marketplace. As is evident by simply walking down the street and seeing so many people on their mobile phone, the continued growth in the CMRS industry in 2003, demonstrates the increased demand for and reliance upon mobile services. With over 160.6 million mobile telephone subscribers, roughly a 54 percent penetration rate, it is imperative that the Commission and Congress continue to work together to ensure customers can benefit from increased carrier competition and continue to enjoy new and innovative products and quality service.

Wireless voice communications is by far the most competitive and innovative market in the Commission's purview. Today's *Report* informs us that an astonishing 97 percent of the total U.S. population lives in counties with access to three or more different operators offering mobile telephone service, and that 30 percent of the population can now choose from seven or more carriers. Although these numbers are impressive, I look forward to working with my colleagues to increase access to wireless services to *all* U.S. consumers.

This is the most comprehensive report to date and I applaud the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau's hard work in continually striving to obtain the most accurate and diverse data.