

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS**

*Re: Local Telephone Competition and Broadband Reporting; Local Competition and Broadband Reporting, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Order on Reconsideration*

One month ago, the Commission embarked on its fourth Section 706 inquiry into the reasonable and timely availability of advanced services, or broadband, for all Americans. Today, we release a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeking comment about how to improve our broadband data gathering program. I fully support both of these efforts. But our approach here is backwards. Our statutory inquiry under Section 706 will be complete *before* we improve our data collection. This is putting the cart before the horse at a time when we cannot afford to be waylaid by broadband data that tells less than the full deployment story.

Broadband is the great infrastructure challenge facing this generation. Statistics show we rank 11<sup>th</sup> in the world in broadband penetration. This is simply unacceptable. We must do better. To develop better broadband policy, we need better broadband data. Today's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking represents a positive step towards more and better information about the real rate of deployment of advanced services in this country. I especially am pleased that we seek comment on requiring filers to specify the number of connections, by technology and service speed, in reporting zip codes. This will make it possible for the Commission to have access to data that will improve our analysis and enhance our decision-making.