

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JONATHAN S. ADELSTEIN**

Re: Comprehensive Review of Universal Service Fund Management, Administration, and Oversight, WC Docket No. 05-195.

Our universal service programs strengthen the links in our communications network and, today, we open today an inquiry about how to reinforce and improve those programs. By seeking comment comprehensively on our administration, management and oversight of the program, we again demonstrate our commitment to its effectiveness and integrity.

In the Telecommunications Act of 1996, Congress reaffirmed its commitment to universal service by enshrining the principles of keeping our communities connected and ensuring that the latest advanced communications services reach all Americans. Universal service has played an important role in stimulating and maintaining the high levels of telephone penetration that our country now enjoys, and the program will be a key component of meeting the growing broadband challenge.

To ensure continued success, we must remain committed to monitoring, auditing, reviewing and reinforcing this program. Part of that process is being responsive to criticisms of the Commission's management, and this item seeks comment on a wide-ranging set of proposals. It also means building on the many successes and positive improvements that the Commission and the universal service community have already made. Indeed, I appreciate very much the dedication of the Members of Congress, Commission staff, contributors, beneficiaries, and many others who have worked hard to make this program a success. With the help of this broad community, we can further strengthen the program and ensure that it continues the positive strides that it has already made.