

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN KEVIN J. MARTIN**

Re: Promotion of Competitive Networks in Local Telecommunications Markets, WT Docket No. 99-217

All consumers, regardless of where they live, should enjoy the benefits of competition. Today's Order eliminates exclusive contracts between telecom providers and owners of apartment buildings. This decision will help provide Americans living in apartment buildings with the same choices as people that live in the suburbs. This action follows in the footsteps of our recent Order to prohibit similar exclusive arrangements for video services offered in apartment buildings.

There is no reason that consumers living in apartment buildings should be locked into one service provider. Competition is ultimately the best protector of the consumer's interest. It is the best method of delivering the benefits of choice, innovation, and affordability to American consumers.

Consistent with my commitment to fostering a competitive marketplace and consumer choice, I have and will continue to encourage new entrants trying to break into both the voice and video markets. Importantly, our policies seek to support all new entrants and do not favor one technology or industry over another. Moreover, this Order demonstrates the Commission and my commitment to ensure we achieve regulatory parity by applying a consistent regulatory framework across platforms.

This Order demonstrates the Commission's commitment to ensure that all consumers—including those living in apartment buildings—benefit from competition in the provision of voice and video services.