

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER JONATHAN S. ADELSTEIN**

*Re: High-Cost Universal Service Support; Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, WC Docket No. 05-337, CC Docket No. 96-45.*

Universal service has long been at the heart of telecommunications policy. The resulting benefits – economic and social, in health care and education, among many others – accrue to us all, no matter where we live. So I am pleased today to support this Notice of Inquiry that will respond to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals review of the high-cost support mechanism for non-rural carriers. I support this broad inquiry into the merits of several plans to modify the existing mechanism and to define key statutory terms that are essential to carrying out Congress' wish that we preserve and advance the fund. By working with all stakeholders - states, carriers, and other agencies – I am confident we will ensure the fund continues to bring the benefits of universal service to us all, no matter where we live. And yet today's action is just one piece of the larger universal service and broadband puzzle. I am pleased that this NOI seeks comment on the effects of high-cost mechanism reform on both the national broadband plan and the 2008 Farm Bill's comprehensive rural broadband strategy. Through these different proceedings, the Commission is taking essential steps to ensure that universal service continues to meet our communications challenges.