

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER ROBERT M. McDOWELL**

Re: *Petition for Declaratory Ruling to Clarify Provisions of Section 332(c)(7)(B) to Ensure Timely Siting Review and to Preempt Under Section 253 State and Local Ordinances that Classify All Wireless Siting Proposals as Requiring a Variance*, WT Docket No. 08-165.

In pursuit of helping to create more choices for consumers, I have long emphasized the importance of removing regulatory roadblocks to ease the ability of new entrants, and existing service providers, to build more delivery platforms for innovative services. For instance, I heartily supported the Commission's work to: free up the TV white spaces for unlicensed use, set shot clocks for local video franchise proceedings, and classify broadband services – no matter the platform – as unregulated Title I information services, to name just a few examples.

Today we are taking yet another positive deregulatory step: We are promoting deployment of broadband, and other emerging wireless services, by reducing the delays associated with the construction and improvement of wireless facilities. I am pleased to support this declaratory ruling, and I thank Chairman Genachowski for his leadership in this area.

Our ruling strikes an elegant balance between establishing a deregulatory national framework to clear unnecessary underbrush, while preserving state and local control over tower siting. In creating deadlines for decisions on wireless siting requests – 90 days for the review of collocation applications and 150 days for the review of other siting applications – we have both granted the industry greater certainty and provided our state and local colleagues reasonable periods for action, as well as the flexibility, to fully consider the nature and scope of a particular siting request. Put another way, our action eliminates unreasonable delay and uncertainty, the costs of which are passed on to wireless consumers, and allows our state and local colleagues the continued ability to safeguard the interests of their constituents. As we fashion a National Broadband Plan for Congress, we should continue to adopt simple initiatives to speed broadband deployment such as this one, which will help spur America's Internet economy, create jobs, and make us more competitive internationally.

On a related point, in recent months, I have heard many in the wireless industry and elsewhere call for "more spectrum." Some have suggested a critical need for many hundreds of megahertz. I fully agree that identifying additional bandwidth for long-term growth is a necessary and worthy endeavor, and I look forward to engaging in that effort. In the meantime, though, I hope that today's action – and the associated reduction in regulatory costs – will also free up capital that may be more effectively used to take better advantage of the immediate fixes already available in the marketplace. These include more robust deployment of enhanced antenna systems; improved development, testing and roll-out of creative technologies, where appropriate, such as cognitive radios; and enhanced consideration of, and more targeted consumer education on, the use of femto cells. Each of these technological options augments capacity and coverage, which are especially important for data and multimedia transmissions.

In short, the Commission's action today will save the builders of tomorrow's broadband infrastructure time and money. It is my hope that those two crucial resources will be used to squeeze more efficiency out of the airwaves while we undergo the slower process of identifying and bringing more spectrum to market. Accordingly, I eagerly anticipate learning more about the benefits that our decision today has on technological improvements and, ultimately, on consumers.

Thank you to Ruth Milkman and the talented Wireless Telecommunications Bureau staff. Also, many thanks to Austin Schlick and his team in OGC for strengthening the legal arguments underpinning this ruling. We especially appreciate the close coordination among your teams and the 8th floor offices on this draft. Today is a win-win due in no small part to your efforts.