

**STATEMENT OF  
CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI**

*Re: Inquiry Concerning the Deployment of Advanced Telecommunications Capability to All Americans in a Reasonable and Timely Fashion, and Possible Steps to Accelerate Such Deployment Pursuant to Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, as Amended by the Broadband Data Improvement Act; A National Broadband Plan for Our Future, GN Docket Nos. 09-137, 09-51, Sixth Broadband Deployment Report*

Broadband is critical 21st century infrastructure, to which every American household and small business must have access to maximize our nation's economic growth, catalyze investment, spur job creation, and ensure our global competitiveness. Accordingly, Congress has instructed the FCC to periodically determine whether broadband is being deployed in a reasonable and timely fashion to all Americans.

The report we release today uses new data and improved analysis to take an honest look at the current state of broadband in America. Consistent with the findings of the National Broadband Plan, the report points out the great broadband successes in the United States, including as many as 290 million Americans who have gained access to broadband over the past decade. But the statute requires more. It requires the agency to reach a conclusion about whether all—not some, not most—Americans are being served in a reasonable and timely fashion. In other words, it requires a conclusion about whether the United States is on the road to achieving truly universal broadband availability, of the kind that our country achieved in the previous century with respect to traditional telephone service.

On Congress's question of universality—whether all Americans are on track to being served—the best available data shows that between 14 and 24 million Americans live in areas where they cannot get broadband. These are mostly expensive-to-serve areas with low population density. Without substantial reforms to the agency's universal service programs, these areas will continue to be unserved, denied access to the transformative power of broadband.

So, taking account of the millions of Americans who, despite years of waiting, still have little prospect of getting broadband deployed to their homes, we must conclude that broadband is not being deployed to all Americans in a reasonable and timely fashion. Fortunately, the National Broadband Plan has charted a course to accelerate broadband investment and help ensure that all Americans can connect to the vital infrastructure of the 21st century. These policies include reforming the Universal Service Fund to support broadband through public-private partnerships, without increasing the projected size of the Fund; unleashing additional spectrum to enable build out of mobile broadband networks; removing red tape and barriers to infrastructure investment; and collecting better data on broadband availability, penetration, pricing, and performance to help policymakers and consumers alike.

As a unanimous Commission held in its Joint Statement on Broadband earlier this year: “Working to make sure that America has world-leading high-speed broadband networks—both wired and wireless—lies at the very core of the FCC's mission in the 21st century.” As numerous studies show, America is behind where it needs to be on broadband to maintain its global competitiveness and drive economic growth. Today's report is a reminder that we must move swiftly to implement the recommendations of the National Broadband Plan. I look forward to working with my colleagues to fulfill our responsibility.