

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER ROBERT M. McDOWELL**

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*, GN Docket No. 10-159, Seventh Broadband Deployment Notice of Inquiry

Broadband grew from being available to 15 percent of Americans in 2003 to 95 percent of the population a mere six years later, making it the fastest penetrating disruptive technology in American history. We can all agree that areas for improvement will always confront us, and focusing on connecting those who currently do not have access to high-speed Internet should be our highest priority. However, we should not ignore the basis for the phenomenal success of broadband: a hands-off approach by government.

I welcome the opportunity for the Commission to take another look at America's progress in broadband deployment, especially and most importantly, because we have been directed to do so by Congress. In particular, the Telecommunications Act of 1996 requires that the FCC determine whether “advanced telecommunications capability is being *deployed* to all Americans in a reasonable and timely fashion.” As a general matter, I support the Commission's effort to ask many questions and to seek more granular data. Nevertheless, my support for this inquiry should not be construed as an endorsement of any particular reference to the *Sixth Broadband Deployment Report* released on July 20 of this year. I am concerned that the report's conclusions may be used to promote and support a regulatory agenda that could have the unintended effect of slowing further deployment, usage, investment, and job creation.

As for this fresh inquiry, I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that America continues on its impressive path of proliferating broadband across the nation. In particular, I welcome the opportunity to review any comments that are filed in this docket that indicate areas where FCC action could unintentionally impede or slow down deployment.