

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MEREDITH ATTWELL BAKER**

Re: Reexamination of Roaming Obligations of Commercial Mobile Radio Service Providers and Other Providers of Mobile Data Services, WT Docket No. 05-265.

We act today in a straightforward, narrowly tailored way to ensure that voice services are available to consumers in all parts of the country, regardless of the location of their service provider. Recognizing the evolution of voice roaming services since the Commission's previous order on roaming, we have chosen not to impose negotiation mandates, set rates or timelines or otherwise create onerous burdens on carriers. Instead, we leave ample room for market-driven solutions and have established, through the creation of a rebuttable presumption, a simple procedure that should ensure that no reasonable request for roaming service is denied. This will further serve the interests of consumers who have come to expect anytime, anywhere voice communications.

I believe we are at the beginning of a revolution in mobile broadband services. Although we do not yet have a fully mature market in third generation wireless services, carriers are already beginning to deploy fourth generation networks that will take the benefits of mobile broadband to whole new levels, enabling a range of products and services that will likely prove to be even more transformational than their third generation counterparts. I applaud these efforts and investments.

Given the continuing evolution of the mobile broadband market, we should proceed with great caution before extending any automatic roaming obligations to data services. Important questions need to be resolved with respect to what authority the Commission might have, if any, to act in this area. We must continue to respect the distinctions between mobile voice and data markets. Our actions must be carefully crafted and appropriate to their unique characteristics. Most important, we should take no action that could inadvertently stifle the evolution of data roaming relationships that already exist or inhibit further buildout, investment and innovation.

Given the growing importance of the products and services that run over mobile broadband networks, it is reasonable to seek additional comment on the implications of extending the automatic roaming requirement to data networks. I look forward to hearing from a broad cross section of interested stakeholders in the coming weeks. I also would strongly urge members of the private sector to continue to work together to provide mobile data solutions that promote continued investment and innovation in third and fourth generation networks in all parts of the country to benefit wireless consumers wherever they live, work or travel.

Thank you to the staff of the Wireless Bureau and to my colleagues for their thoughtful work on this item.