

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MEREDITH ATTWELL BAKER**

- Re: *Implementation of Section 224 of the Act, WC Docket No. 07-245, A National Broadband Plan for Our Future, GN Docket No. 09-51*
- Re: *Acceleration of Broadband Deployment: Expanding the Reach and Reducing the Cost of Broadband Deployment by Improving the Policies Regarding Public Rights of Way and Wireless Facilities Siting, WC Docket No. 11- 59*

There are very few concrete steps this Commission can take to promote broadband deployment. The pole attachment proceeding is one of them, and I support our efforts to provide greater certainty and competitive parity in the pole attachment process. We must always act in a manner that reflects the critical safety and reliability interests of the utilities, and I believe we struck the proper balance in this Order.

We take important steps to provide clarity to all stakeholders on wireless attachment rates, timelines, and pole top access issues. The ability to leverage utility poles may be critical for next-generation wireless build-out to fill coverage holes, to more efficiently re-use spectrum, and to take advantage of distributed antenna systems. This is the type of action needed to help us achieve our collective goal of nationwide 4G coverage, and promote greater mobile broadband competition and efficient spectrum policy. We importantly make clear that utilities retain their statutory right to ensure the safety and reliability of their core networks. I expect wireless operators and utilities to work collaboratively to protect electric networks while facilitating access to these new technologies and services.

I also support the effort to raise the profile of important rights of way issues in the accompanying Notice of Inquiry. While our authority to act in this area is limited, the Commission does have a role to highlight impediments to broadband deployment, and I am hopeful we can partner with industry, states and localities to address these challenges together.