

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS**

Re: *Reliability and Continuity of Communications Networks, Including Broadband Technologies*, PS Docket No. 11-60, *Effects on Broadband Communications Networks of Damage or Failure of Network Equipment or Severe Overload*, PS Docket No. 10-92, *Independent Panel Viewing the Impact of Hurricane Katrina on Communications Networks*, EB Docket No. 06-119, Notice of Inquiry.

As we launch today's proceeding on the reliability and continuity of America's communications networks, the images of the devastation along the Gulf Coast from Hurricane Katrina come rushing back. I remember very well traveling with then-Chairman Martin to survey the damage first-hand. We saw communities ripped apart by wind and water, lives uprooted and families divided, and communications networks essential to responding and recovering destroyed. Immediately after, we started looking at ways to improve the reliability, redundancy and survivability of our critical communications infrastructure, and I renewed my call for the creation of the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau. So, I take great pleasure in seeing today's Notice of Inquiry presented by just such a Bureau.

We—the Commission, industry and public safety—learned a number of lessons from Katrina about the impact that disasters can have on networks. We've made some progress in implementing them, but our work was never close to done. And new challenges confront us. Not only is every emergency event different, but our technology tools are different, too. As communications networks migrate from legacy technologies to IP-based services over broadband, we need to make sure that we understand how this impacts service reliability and resiliency. We need to be as prepared as we can possibly be to ensure that public safety responders, the energy and finance sectors, and ordinary citizens can stay connected during times of emergency. After all, it's not a question of if another disaster will strike, but when.

I commend the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau for teeing up so many key questions in this Notice of Inquiry and thank particularly the Chairman for all the hard work he is doing to enhance the safety of our people. Given the importance of this proceeding, I encourage all interested parties to make detailed comments for our consideration. It's going to be a critically-important record for how we go about the job of protecting our critical communications infrastructure.