

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI**

Re: *Amendment of Part 101 of the Commission's Rules to Facilitate the Use of Microwave or Wireless Backhaul and Other Uses and to Provide Additional Flexibility to Broadcast Auxiliary Service and Operational Fixed Microwave Licensees; Petition for Rulemaking filed by Fixed Wireless Communications Coalition to Amend Part 101 of the Commission's Rules to Authorize 60 and 80 MHz Channels in Certain Bands for Broadband Communications, WT Docket No. 10-153, RM-11602*

Groundhog Day officially comes in February, but August is starting to have the feel of the Bill Murray classic at the Commission. For the third August open meeting in a row, we are addressing the issue of wireless backhaul and its important role in the broadband ecosystem.

Backhaul is the skeleton supporting broadband, and wireless backhaul is often a very efficient means of transmitting data among cell sites, or between cell sites and network backbones. Spectrum, in other words, can be an important part of the "middle mile" of broadband networks.

Wireless backhaul is essential to broadband deployment in rural areas in particular, where it may be the only practical high-capacity middle mile solution available.

Last year we modified rules to make additional spectrum available for wireless backhaul, and to provide additional flexibility for licensees to reduce operational costs.

The Commission's actions today will enable even more microwave wireless backhaul deployment in rural areas.

Among other things, today's item grants wireless backhaul providers the flexibility to use smaller antennas; updates the Commission's efficiency standards to reflect today's data-centric world; introduces a Microwave Rural Flexibility Policy; and permits higher capacity links, enabling faster data rates.

This item is a part of our Broadband Acceleration Initiative, focusing on ways to reduce barriers to broadband infrastructure deployment, to speed broadband build-out, and reduce costs to broadband providers, which can then pass those savings onto consumers.

The item also advances the Commission's regulatory reform agenda by removing regulatory barriers that today limit the use of spectrum for wireless backhaul and similar communications. These changes will have a near-term positive impact. For instance, with respect to the Microwave Rural Flexibility Policy, I expect that the Wireless Bureau will act on waiver applications within 90 days, absent extraordinary circumstances. This item removes other regulatory barriers even sooner, with no additional Commission action necessary.

Finally, the item furthers the Commission's spectrum agenda. By allowing more intensive use of microwave spectrum, we can further support broadband deployment, particularly in hard-to-reach rural areas, and enable consumers to reap the benefits that flow from broadband adoption.

The Commission's efforts to promote broadband and wireless backhaul do not end with this Order. Rather, we will continue to evaluate our rules, and the item includes several further inquiries and requests for comment, which we expect will continue our efforts to reduce barriers to broadband deployment.

Thank you to the bureau for your work on this item.