

**STATEMENT OF
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN MIGNON L. CLYBURN**

Re: *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90.

Broadband is no longer a luxury, but a necessity. It is the gateway through which most Americans obtain critical information and services, find jobs, communicate with their teachers and health care providers, and keep up to date with their family and friends. The sad reality, however, is that millions of Americans still lack access to broadband networks, and for those living in areas where the business case will not likely be made for rapid deployment, government engagement is essential.

Today's Order, which leverages private investment and universal service funding, will potentially connect hundreds of thousands of unserved consumers to robust broadband networks. Providers electing to receive funding under the new rules for incremental support must include a one-for-one matching of private investment for each dollar of universal service support. This public-private partnership stretches the impact of federal funding to reach more communities. In addition, it provides a mechanism to make available additional universal service support if the demand exceeds \$300 million, and commits to using any unclaimed funding to reach unserved communities through Connect America Phase II.

We take significant steps to connect these unserved communities and consumers today, and in so doing are moving another step closer to fulfilling goals set forth in our historical overhaul of the high-cost Universal Service Fund: to ensure that *all* Americans have access to voice and broadband services. Comprehensive reforms made this Order possible, and I want to thank former Chairman Genachowski for his leadership on these issues.

None of this would be possible without the support of my fellow Commissioners, whose collaborative efforts to reach a unanimous decision and unleash funding, should help to close the digital divide for hundreds of thousands of Americans.