

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN TOM WHEELER**

Re: *Revision of Part 15 of the Commission's Rules to Permit Unlicensed National Information Infrastructure (U-NII) Devices in the 5 GHz Band*

Today's item to greatly increase the utility of 100 megahertz in the 5 GHz band is a big deal. Our action today will create new opportunities for entrepreneurs and innovators, and much-needed relief to the growing problem of congestion on Wi-Fi networks.

At the same time, it moves us another step closer to ending the analog-era debate of licensed vs. unlicensed spectrum.

In 2014, licensed and unlicensed spectrum are more complimentary than competitive. They are less oil & vinegar and more peanut butter & jelly. Today, virtually every smartphone has two unlicensed technologies, Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, with a third – near field communications – beginning to be added for mobile transactions. And wireless carriers are using Wi-Fi to offload more than 45% of smartphone traffic to fixed networks.

But Wi-Fi has become a victim of its own popularity, and now faces congestion issues of its own.

That's why the Commission is hard at work providing spectrum for both licensed and unlicensed use. Both are critically important to our mobile ecosystem.

In this order, the Commission is taking 100 MHz of unlicensed spectrum at 5 GHz that was barely usable – and not usable at all outdoors – and transforming it into spectrum that is fully usable for Wi-Fi.

To put this 100 MHz number into perspective, that's more usable spectrum than the 2.4 GHz band that gave birth to Wi-Fi in the first place.

This is a big win for consumers who will be able to enjoy faster connections and less congestion, as more spectrum will be available to handle Wi-Fi traffic. It will make it easier to get online wirelessly in public places like airports and convention centers, as well as in your living room.

This is also a big win for American innovators. The changes we are making will provide fertile ground for the growth of "Gigabit Wi-Fi" – the latest generation of ultra-high-speed, high-capacity Wi-Fi that can provide data speeds in excess of 1 Gigabit per second.

We are not stopping here when it comes to unlicensed spectrum. We are committed to making more spectrum available for unlicensed use in our incentive auction proceeding and our 3.5 GHz proceeding, and will continue to carefully study technical analyses that could further expand access to spectrum in up to 195 additional megahertz of spectrum in two other portions of the 5 GHz band.

Thank you also to OET for your hard and creative work on this item.