

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN TOM WHEELER**

Re: *Inquiry Concerning the Deployment of Advanced Telecommunications Capability to All Americans in a Reasonable and Timely Fashion, and Possible Steps to Accelerate Such Deployment Pursuant to Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, as Amended by the Broadband Data Improvement Act*, GN Docket No. 15-191.

The fundamental principle of broadband policy, as set forth by Congress, is that all Americans should have access to robust broadband services, no matter where they live. With this Notice of Inquiry (“NOI”), we set about to quantify the status of achieving that policy goal.

Earlier this year, the Commission defined broadband as connections with throughput speeds of at least 25 Mbps downstream and 3 Mbps upstream. This standard recognizes how consumers actually use broadband at home today, and is “table stakes” in 21st century communications.

But the discussion in the *2015 Broadband Progress Report* of the new speed benchmark emphasized fixed terrestrial broadband services. Even though we were unable to incorporate mobile into the analysis, the *2015 Broadband Progress Report* found that “the day may be fast approaching when we would consider ‘advanced telecommunications capability’ to be fully deployed only in areas where consumers have access to both mobile and fixed high-speed broadband in light of the distinct characteristics of these services.” Building on the direction laid out in the *2015 Broadband Progress Report*, this NOI now takes the next step by asking whether “advanced telecommunications capability” should be considered fully deployed only in areas where consumers have access to both mobile and fixed broadband. Doing so would recognize the growing use of mobile broadband by consumers.

The NOI also seeks comment on the urban/rural disparity in the deployment of advanced telecommunications capability, asks about speed benchmarks for satellite broadband, and delves further into whether the Commission should adopt latency and consistency benchmarks as a part of the determination of what constitutes broadband.

I look forward to a robust record informing our analysis.