

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER AJIT PAI**

Re: *Report to Congress Regarding the Open-Market Reorganization for the Betterment of International Telecommunications Act (ORBIT Act)*, IB Docket No. 15-16.

In the unforgettable *Groundhog Day*, Pittsburgh TV weatherman Phil Connors found himself doomed to relive the same day over and over again: “I wake up every day, right here, right in Punxsutawney, and it’s always February 2nd, and there’s nothing I can do about it.”¹ Unfortunately, the FCC’s annual ORBIT Act report is our Groundhog Day.²

For each of the last 16 years, the Commission has dutifully reported to Congress on our progress in ensuring the privatization of INTELSAT and Inmarsat. A decade ago, we were able to report success—the privatization was complete, and the ORBIT Act’s goal had been accomplished. Yet ten years, ten reports, and more than 200 pages later, the FCC is still stuck in Punxsutawney. We issue substantially the same report to Congress over and over again, wasting dozens of hours of valuable staff time each year to make hundreds of non-substantive revisions.

But we do not need to keep reliving the past. The U.S. House of Representatives passed the FCC Consolidated Reporting Act 411-0 in February, and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation reported the bill to the Senate floor just last month. This legislation would eliminate the ORBIT Act report and let the Commission focus on a comprehensive review of the communications marketplace every two years.

I hope that this bipartisan legislation will be enacted into law. Maybe then the FCC, like Phil, could finally wake up to February 3rd and stop perpetually stepping into a waterlogged pothole. Bing!³

¹ Phil Connors, *Groundhog Day* (Columbia Pictures 1993).

² Open-Market Reorganization for the Betterment of International Telecommunications Act, Pub. L. No. 106-180, 114 Stat. 48 (2000), *as amended*, Pub. L. No. 107-233, 116 Stat. 1480 (2002) (codified at 47 U.S.C. § 701 *et seq.*) (ORBIT Act).

³ Ned Ryerson, *Groundhog Day* (Columbia Pictures 1993), *available at* <http://bit.ly/1DocQKd>.