

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER MIGNON L. CLYBURN**

Re: *Improvements to Benchmarks and Related Requirements Governing Hearing Aid-Compatible Mobile Handsets*, WT Docket No. 15-285

This past June, I had the privilege of visiting the Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Massachusetts. There, as a part of my #ConnectingCommunities tour, I met with two impressive students, brothers Logan and Shae, as they demonstrated innovative ways in which off-the-shelf technologies are enabling them to communicate with increased ease and aiding them in their quest to gain more knowledge, skills and independence. It was truly marvelous to see firsthand the transformative impact that access to technology is having on the lives of these students.

That is why I am pleased to support the item before us today, because it promises to deliver even more options and accessible devices to millions of Americans who deserve just as much choice as everyone else when it comes to wireless handsets. Industry leaders and consumer organizations joined forces and submitted a consensus proposal that this item significantly adopts. In addition to streamlining and increasing the hearing aid compatibility deployment benchmarks for providers and manufacturers, we chart a clear path going forward towards pursuing 100 percent hearing aid compatibility.

Over the next several years, industry and consumer groups will establish a task force to examine the technical and market conditions for wireless handsets as well as hearing improvement technologies. Following this review, the group has committed to submitting a report to the Commission, by the end of 2022, on the achievability of a 100 percent hearing aid compatibility deployment benchmark. I know I am in good company in saying that I look forward to the day when all Americans who use hearing aids have the same options as everyone else when purchasing a mobile phone.

In addition to recognizing the contributions of HLAA, Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the National Association of the Deaf, TIA, CTIA and CCA, I would like to thank the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau for their hard work on this historic item.