

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Promoting Diversification of Ownership in the Broadcasting Services*, MB Docket No. 07-294;
Amendment of Part 1 of the Commission's Rules Concerning Practice and Procedure, Amendment of CORES Registration System, MD Docket No. 10-234.

Americans who serve as officers or board members of public radio and television stations generally don't do it for money or personal glory. Quite the opposite: they're volunteers who want to serve their communities. The last thing we should do is penalize them with unnecessary regulatory burdens, particularly when these requirements will deter them from volunteering in the first place.

Unfortunately, the FCC previously did just that. It decided to force these individuals to give the Commission sensitive personal information like Social Security numbers. Today, we correct that mistake before it takes effect. Noncommercial educational broadcasters (NCEs) have raised legitimate concerns that the FCC's current rule will make it harder to recruit qualified and committed volunteers to serve on their boards. For example, many have said that the current reporting requirement will "undermine the ability of NCE licensees to perform their missions" and that losing qualified individuals "would exact a heavy toll on public broadcasting."¹ The evidence in the record on this point has gone un rebutted.

I should note that this decision is important, but also modest. For example, we will still require NCE broadcasters to provide the FCC with information about the gender, race, and ethnicity of officers and board members. As a result, our approach properly balances the need to improve the FCC's broadcast ownership data with the potential chilling effects that a mandatory reporting requirement of this kind could have on participation in NCE station governance.

I'd like to thank Michelle Carey, Chris Clark, Brendan Holland, Mary Beth Murphy, and Jake Riehm from the Media Bureau for their hard work on this *Order* and their continued dedication to the public interest. And I would like to thank Americans all across our country who volunteer for their local public broadcaster. My message to you today is simple: I want the Commission to be your ally, not your adversary.

¹ Petition for Reconsideration of the NCE Licensees (filed May 3, 2016), MB Docket No. 10-234.