

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Jurisdictional Separations and Referral to the Federal-State Joint Board*, CC Docket No. 80-286.

“Jurisdictional separations” is not a phrase one hears very often these days. In many ways, these rules are a remnant of a bygone era where monopolies dominated the market for local telephone exchange service. The telecom marketplace of today bears little resemblance to that world. Yet for a subset of carriers, the jurisdictional separations process still matters.

Since 2001, the Commission has frozen the separations rules to ensure stability for small, rate-of-return carriers and to give the Federal-State Joint Board the opportunity to pursue substantive separations reform. We have extended that freeze every few years ever since – an extension process that consumes resources and can detract time and attention away from efforts to complete broader and substantive reforms. With the most recent extension of the freeze due to expire on December 31, the Commission must again tackle how best to move forward.

I approached this most recent round with the goal of reaching common ground with my hardworking colleagues here on the Commission and our State counterparts, including those we serve with on the Joint Board. I appreciated the chance to hear directly from my fellow Joint Board members and learn from their perspectives. During this process, the State members of the Joint Board shared with me their concerns about the impact that a long-term extension would have on the prospect for substantive separations reform. So I appreciate that my fellow federal Joint Board Member, Commissioner O’Rielly, was willing to work with me to reach a compromise. In fact, the agreement we reached now aligns with the input provided by our State counterparts in this proceeding.

I want to thank the State members of the Joint Board for their input. I appreciated the opportunity to work with them through this process. And I look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with them on policies that will help bring more broadband to more Americans.