

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Amendment of Parts 1, 21, 73, 74 and 101 of the Commission's Rules to Facilitate the Provision of Fixed and Mobile Broadband Access, Educational and Other Advanced Services in the 2150-2162 and 2500-2690 MHz Bands, WT Docket No. 03-66 (Terminated); Transforming the 2.5 GHz Band, WT Docket No. 18-120*

Currently, a large portion of the 2.5 GHz band in approximately half of the United States lies fallow. And it's been that way for more than 20 years. This must change. We need to get this valuable spectrum into the hands of those who will provide service, including 5G, to Americans across the country, particularly in rural areas where the spectrum is currently mostly unused. So today, we take the first step toward putting that asset to work.

We're thinking openly and broadly as we look at licenses in the 2.5 GHz band's Educational Broadcasting Service, or EBS. One example: we ask about giving existing EBS licensees, along with other educational entities and Tribal communities, the chance to obtain new priority licenses and then auctioning off the remaining white spaces. We also propose to give current users more flexibility, such as by standardizing license areas and eliminating outdated restrictions on lease terms and how the spectrum is used.

I'm looking forward to beginning this process because I'm bullish on its end: making more spectrum available for the mobile services consumers increasingly rely upon.

I'd like to thank the staff who worked on this item: Chas Eberle, Nese Guendelsberger, John Schauble, Catherine Schroeder, Blaise Scinto, Dana Shaffer, Nadja Sodos Wallace, Don Stockdale, Joel Taubenblatt, and Nancy Zaczek from the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau; and David Horowitz, Keith McCrickard, and Bill Richardson from the Office of General Counsel. Unlike much of the 2.5 GHz band, you put your talents to productive use for the American people every day.