

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Nationwide Number Portability*, WC Docket No. 17-244; *Numbering Policies for Modern Communications*, WC Docket No. 13-97.

Nationwide number portability (NNP) is one part of the Commission's efforts to promote competition and consumer choice. It means being able to keep your phone number when you switch to any carrier, anywhere in the country. Unfortunately, this isn't possible today for consumers who want to switch to certain carriers, typically smaller ones.

But a lot has happened since we adopted a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* and *Notice of Inquiry* on this topic last year. Not only have we received public input on our proposals, but in June, the North American Numbering Council (NANC) issued a report on the viability of specific models for achieving nationwide number portability.¹ And just this month, we asked the NANC to push forward with investigating the technical requirements necessary to support NNP, as well as the costs and benefits of several approaches to implementing it.

Today, we take another step toward empowering consumers to change carriers anywhere in the country without having to change phone numbers. Specifically, we amend our rules to allow carriers to decide amongst themselves which party should be responsible for querying the number portability database when routing a call. We also extend forbearance from interexchange dialing parity requirements to all carriers so that now there will be regulatory parity across all carriers.

Now, I recognize that this all is pretty dry and technical. But this *Order* matters. It matters because we're clearing away outdated rules to enable creative thinking about how calls can be handled more efficiently. It matters because we're aiming to implement NNP in a way that most benefits and least disrupts consumers. My hope is that our actions today, and the ongoing work by the NANC and industry, will soon bring about NNP. That will result in more competition, consumer choice, and convenience.

Thank you to the Commission staff who worked on this order: Heather Hendrickson, Dan Kahn, Kris Monteith, Sherwin Siy, and Ann Stevens from the Wireline Competition Bureau, and Terry Cavanaugh and Rick Mallen from the Office of General Counsel.

¹ North American Numbering Council, Nationwide Number Portability Issues Working Group, Report on Findings related to ATIS Models on Nationwide Number Portability (2018), available at http://www.nancchair.org/docs/mtg_docs/Jun18_NANC_NNP_Report_Final.pdf.