

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Inquiry Concerning Deployment of Advanced Telecommunications Capability to All Americans in a Reasonable and Timely Fashion*, GN Docket No. 18-238, 2019  
Broadband Deployment Report

This year's Section 706 report contains more good news for American leadership in 5G. The FCC's policies are working.

Internet speeds in the U.S. have never been faster: they're up nearly 40%. The digital divide—the percentage of Americans without access to high-speed Internet access—narrowed by nearly 20%. Providers built fiber broadband out to more homes last year than ever before. The U.S. now has the largest commercial deployment of 5G in the world, and we're predicted to have more than two times the percentage of 5G connections as Asia. That is more broadband for more Americans.

But more than the numbers, the FCC's approach is benefiting everyday Americans in communities around the country. In Blue River Township, Indiana, I sat at a kitchen table with Linda Muegge. Her family runs a small farm in a community of 1,500 people. She talked about the difference a new broadband connection is making in her life and the lives of her children. Her son, Chris, went to graduate school at Purdue and earned an advanced degree in cattle nutrition. Rather than moving to a big city after graduating, Chris moved back home and launched a successful online consulting business, mostly for cattle owners, with clients as far away as Costa Rica. Chris uses the new broadband connection to see the cattle in HD and download large data sets to monitor their feeding and health. Without the high-speed connection, Chris would not be able to live in Blue River. Now, he can pitch in at the farm while continuing to pursue his own high-tech business.<sup>1</sup>

In Sioux City, Iowa, I visited a plant that manufactures the poles and towers needed for new wireless deployments. Five hundred people now work there welding, galvanizing, and pressing the steel needed for broadband infrastructure. Tyler talked about the increased demand they're now seeing at the facility for small cell poles, which are the building blocks of 5G.<sup>2</sup>

In Lewisville, Texas, an infrastructure company just opened a new 26,000 square foot facility. They are using it to train and hire the tower crews that are now building out broadband networks across the country. Devin, a former combat engineer, showed me the ropes and just some of the skills that his crews are learning.<sup>3</sup> Rick, who's been training tower hands and telecom crews for nearly two decades told me that his teams have never been busier. In fact, they are looking to hire more than 500 workers for good-paying, 5G jobs at this one facility. And more broadly, the tower industry is looking to add 20,000 workers as the construction of new 5G networks accelerates.

The FCC is working to encourage even more broadband infrastructure deployment. We updated federal rules regarding the placement of small cells and other wireless facilities. We built on common sense siting reforms adopted in states and cities across the country. And we freed up more spectrum than any other country in the world.

None of this is to say that our job at the FCC is done. As the Report makes clear, far too many Americans remain unable to access high-speed broadband, and we have much more work left to do. But the question Congress set out in Section 706 is "whether advanced telecommunications capability is being deployed to all Americans in a reasonable and timely fashion." The data show that it is. I look forward to

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<sup>1</sup> <https://twitter.com/BrendanCarrFCC/status/991762618028306434>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://twitter.com/BrendanCarrFCC/status/1001932141805137920>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://twitter.com/BrendanCarrFCC/status/1092551275466633218>.

building on this good momentum and ensuring that even more Americans can benefit from the economic opportunity that broadband enables.