

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Verizon Communications*, File No.: EB-TCD-18-00027698.

For most Americans, their wireless phone goes wherever they go. And every phone must constantly share its—and its owner’s—location with a wireless carrier in order to enable the carrier to know where to route calls. Information about a customer’s location is highly personal and sensitive. As the U.S. Supreme Court has observed, this type of information “provides an intimate window into a person’s life.”¹ This makes it critical that all telecommunications carriers protect the confidentiality of their customers’ location information. Congress has made this requirement clear in the Communications Act. And the Commission has made this requirement clear in its implementing rules.

Today, we also make clear that we will not hesitate to vigorously enforce these statutory provisions and regulations. After a thorough investigation, we find that all of our nation’s major wireless carriers apparently failed to comply with these vitally important requirements. In brief, long after these companies were on notice that their customers’ location data had been breached, they continued to sell access to that data for many months without taking reasonable measures to protect it from unauthorized disclosure. This FCC will not tolerate any telecommunications carrier putting American consumers’ privacy at risk. We therefore propose fines against these four carriers totaling more than \$200 million.

For their diligent work on this item, I’d like to thank Rosemary Cabral, Rebecca Carino, Michael Epshteyn, Rosemary Harold, Jermaine Haynes, Erica McMahon, Ann Morgan, Shannon Lipp, Tanishia Proctor, Nakasha Ramsey, Phil Rosario, Mika Savir, Daniel Stepanicich, David Strickland, Raphael Sznajder, Kristi Thompson, David Valdez, and Shana Yates of the Enforcement Bureau; Justin Faulb, Lisa Hone, Melissa Kirkel, Kris Monteith, and Zach Ross of the Wireline Competition Bureau; Martin Doczkat, Aspasia Paroutsas, and Robert Pavlak of the Office of Engineering and Technology; Michael Carlson, Douglas Klein, Marcus Maher, Linda Oliver, Joel Rabinovitz, and Bill Richardson of the Office of General Counsel; and Virginia Metallo of the Office of Economics and Analytics. Our Enforcement Bureau staff reviewed more than 50,000 pages of documents during the course of this complex investigation, and their painstaking efforts to uncover the details of what happened enabled us to take this strong enforcement action. While this nitty-gritty investigative work is not glamorous and can take longer than some in the peanut gallery might like, it is indispensable to building a case that will stand up in a court of law rather than only garnering some headlines.

¹ *Carpenter v. United States*, 138 S. Ct. 2206, 2217 (2018).