

STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS

Re: *American Broadband & Telecommunications Company, Jeffrey S. Ansted*, File No.: EB-IHD-17-00023554.

For too long, many parties facing investigation by the Commission's Enforcement Bureau have asserted overbroad—and sometimes plainly frivolous—confidentiality claims. These tactics hamstringing our ability to vindicate the public interest and deter wrongdoing, and they make it impossible for people outside the Commission to understand the key facts of each case. I am pleased to support this Order on Reconsideration, which makes public important details about American Broadband's apparent violations of our rules governing the Lifeline program.

This is not the first time that I have raised this issue and commended it to the Commission's attention. As I emphasized in my statement on our recent Notices of Apparent Liability regarding apparently improper uses of customer location data by four major wireless carriers, “we must begin resolving such requests [for confidentiality] immediately upon receipt.”¹ I will, therefore, continue to encourage the Commission to alert parties to overbroad confidentiality requests as soon as Commission staff review the documents. Resolving these issues efficiently can speed our proceedings and conserve valuable Commission resources. And, for parties that continue to stretch out confidentiality rules, today's Order should be a signal that the Commission will strictly and fairly apply the process for handling confidentiality designations set out in Section 0.459 of our rules.

¹ See *AT&T Inc.*, Notice of Apparent Liability, FCC 20-26, File No.: EB-TCD-18-00027704 (Statement of Commissioner Geoffrey Starks Approving in Part and Dissenting in Part).