

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Unlicensed Use of the 6 GHz Band, Expanding Flexible Use in Mid-Band Spectrum Between 3.7 GHz and 24 GHz*, ET Docket No. 18-295 and GN Docket No. 17-183.

The stories you will soon read about this vote will speak volumes about its significance. You will read about the FCC supercharging Wi-Fi. And you will read about the big boost we're giving to applications so many Americans rely on today—from our connected TVs to the devices we use to stream content or complete those online video calls we're now all too familiar with.

All of those takes will be right. And yet when we look back at this decision years from now, I have a feeling that none of those applications will be the ones we talk about when we discuss the innovations powered by these 1,200 MHz of spectrum.

Part of this stems from a very human limitation on our thinking. We tend to underestimate the pace and nature of technological change. We often assume that the next big thing will just be a faster version of what we have today. Our brains can understand faster Wi-Fi but struggle with the more visionary applications that are right around the corner.

This is not a new phenomenon. Henry Ford reportedly said that if he had asked people what they wanted, they would have said “faster horses.” Indeed, we called the first cars “horseless carriages.” And to belabor the analogy, what we're voting on today is not higher quality hay for the horses; it is high-octane stuff. That is why studies show that our decision will add nearly \$200 billion to the economy when added with other unlicensed bands.

So I suspect this order will not be remembered because it enabled faster Netflix downloads. We don't know what the future holds, but maybe the present pandemic gives us some clues about what's around the corner.

Millions of kids, including mine, are out of school today and stuck at home. Teachers and parents are working hard to keep them learning. Some are turning to video calls to enhance in-home learning, but even that does not capture the feedback between student and teacher that exists in the classroom. Educators we have spoken with say it's particularly difficult to teach hands-on subjects, like science.

Today's decision can help change that by unleashing a new wave of virtual reality applications. Imagine the immersive learning experience students could enjoy in a virtual 3D environment. In fact, teams at Facebook that are spread across the globe regularly use Oculus headsets to hold weekly meetings. Interacting with coworkers in a virtual meeting room captures some of the spark of exchanging views in person. Facebook's Oculus currently has a VR solution used to teach medical students, and just months ago, Facebook launched a VR pilot project at a Seattle-area high school.

Or take grocery shopping. Even in normal times, I do not enjoy heading to the store. And with the pandemic many Americans are now standing in lines that snake around for blocks while maintaining 6 feet of physical separation. Instead of all that, imagine putting on VR glasses while sitting on your couch at home, walking virtually down the aisle at your local grocery store and quickly looking at, picking up, and choosing items; instant check out, immediate delivery, no contact.

This type of transformative VR can solve pain points in our daily lives, and getting to that near future requires a next-gen connection. Even with the world's strongest 5G networks, engineers tell us that VR devices will be powered by the unlicensed spectrum bands we free up today. Enabling those new connections will help drive the entire 5G ecosystem forward. So I am pleased to support today's order.

I also want to thank the Chairman and my colleagues for seeking further comment on greenlighting very low power devices in these bands. Those might be the key links that unlock

immersive VR devices, so I am glad we are seeking comment on letting those operate at power levels that will work in the real world.

Finally, I want to thank the Office of Engineering and Technology, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, and so many others at the Commission for their work on this historic item. It has my support.