

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Promoting Broadcast Internet Innovation through ATSC 3.0*, MB Docket No. 20-145.

Broadcast TV signals blanket the country. And those powerful airwaves are now undergoing their most significant upgrade since 1980s when engineers started their work on the digital television transition. All of that is thanks to a new and innovative broadcast transmission standard known as ATSC 3.0.

To date, much of the attention on this standard has focused on the wide-range of NEXTGEN TV applications it can enable—everything from bringing Ultra HD video to the airwaves to ushering in a more interactive, accessible, and personalized experience for the viewing public.

But those exciting applications only tell part of the story. A year ago, I gave a speech at the NAB convention where I drew attention to an entirely different set of ATSC 3.0 applications. I suggested that we should think about this technology as a new and competitive broadband pipe. After all, the technology can leverage the power and coverage of broadcast transmissions to deliver a 25 Mbps data stream to Americans. That’s why we are seeking to promote this new set of “Broadcast Internet” services with our decision today. That term captures even more of the innovative applications we’re talking about.

These new Broadcast Internet services are part of a broader trend we’re seeing in communications. From innovative 5G offerings to high-capacity fixed services, providers from previously distinct sectors are competing like never before to offer high-speed Internet services through a mix of different technologies. ATSC 3.0 is the technology that will allow broadcast spectrum to play an even greater role in this converged market for connectivity.

As our networks continue to mature, they won’t always rely on the same spectrum bands for inbound and outbound data paths. Instead, hybrid networks will look for the most efficient and cost-effective ways to deliver content to users. This will be the future of connectivity. And this is where broadcast spectrum, delivering Broadcast Internet services, can leverage its inherent strengths to compete in this market. Those strengths include wide-area coverage over low-band spectrum and an efficient one-to-many architecture.

Take autonomous vehicles, which is just one area where Broadcast Internet services could play a pivotal role. It could send out targeted map and traffic data or provide large, fleet-wide software updates—quickly and efficiently.

For IoT, smart ag, and telemedicine applications, Broadcast Internet’s low-band spectrum could provide an efficient means of communicating with devices over wide areas.

For 5G, it could help augment coverage or add capacity by shifting data off cellular networks.

For both fixed and mobile services, as we look to push more and more data to the edge of the network, Broadcast Internet services could provide one way of moving all that data in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

And for many Americans, this new technology means they could have another option for high-speed downloads—from movies to applications—delivered over the same spectrum that they’ve long used for over-the-air television.

At the Commission, we have been doing our part to facilitate deployment of ATSC 3.0. Over the objections of some, we authorized broadcasters to transition voluntarily to ATSC 3.0 offerings in 2017 so

they could test the market and explore the possibilities of this new technology. Since then, the Media Bureau has worked collaboratively with broadcasters to address many of the technical and licensing issues that have come up. And we recently initiated a proceeding to expand the use of single frequency networks, which will ultimately help ATSC 3.0 reach its full potential, whether we are talking NEXTGEN TV or Broadcast Internet services.

This approach has worked. Broadcasters are making great progress in their NEXTGEN TV offerings, and many are already exploring ways to support Broadcast Internet services.

But I think there is more we can do to green light Broadcast Internet offerings and encourage even more investment in these services. That is why I took the lead on this item, which will further unlock the potential of broadcast spectrum, empower innovation, and create significant value for broadcasters and the American public alike.

The item does so by removing the uncertainty cast by media regulations that were drafted for an entirely different set of broadcast TV services. In the Declaratory Ruling, we ensure that Broadcast Internet services are not weighed down by legacy media regulations by clarifying that the Commission's broadcast television station ownership rules do not apply to leasing arrangements between broadcasters and third parties for the provision of Broadcast Internet services.

In practice, here's what this decision would mean: It would allow a broadcaster or any other entity to enter into lease agreements with multiple broadcasters in a single geographic market for purposes of offering Broadcast Internet services without triggering the Commission's attribution or ownership rules for television stations. This can provide certainty to broadcasters, investors, tech companies, and other innovators that these agreements will not be subject to dated rules designed to regulate television stations—not autonomous vehicles or telemedicine applications. And this decision helps ensure that broadcasters and other innovators have the flexibility to generate the scale and geographic footprint—both locally and nationally—that may be necessary to support certain Broadcast Internet services.

In today's accompanying Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, we seek comment on whether to clarify or modify our existing rules to further promote the deployment of Broadcast Internet services. Ultimately, it is critical that we identify and remove the overhang of unnecessary government regulations that would otherwise hold back the introduction and growth of new competitive offerings. We want the marketplace—not outdated rules—to determine whether new services will succeed. This new proceeding is an important step in that direction, but it certainly won't be the last.

In closing, I would like to thank Chairman Pai for his continued support for the deployment of ATSC 3.0 and the consumer benefits and innovations it will support. I would also like to recognize the team at the FCC who helped lead this effort, including, in the Media Bureau, Julie Salovaara, Kim Matthews, John Cobb, Ty Bream, Brendan Holland, Maria Mullarkey, Evan Morris, Sarah Whitesell, and Michelle Carey; in the Office of Economics and Analytics, Emily Talaga, Eugene Kiselev, and Andrew Wise; in the Office of Communications Business Opportunities, Belford Lawson; and in my old stomping grounds, the Office of the General Counsel, David Konczal and Bill Richardson.