

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Structure and Practices of the Video Relay Service Program*, CG Docket No. 10-51;
Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities, CG Docket No. 03-123

Video relay service (VRS) provides an essential means of communication between individuals with hearing or speech disabilities who use American Sign Language and voice telephone users. And an important part of promoting the service's success is ensuring that there is an adequate pool of Communications Assistants (CAs)—qualified sign-language interpreters who can interpret and relay a conversation between the signing and speaking parties.

To expand the number of qualified individuals willing and able to work as CAs, the Commission in 2017 authorized a pilot program to allow some CAs to work at home. Our hope was that CAs working from home would provide similar service quality to those working at call centers and that the safeguards we put in place for this pilot program would protect call confidentiality and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

I'm pleased to say that the pilot program has been a success. Therefore, we are making the at-home program permanent. This Report and Order will allow CAs to telework from their homes and reliably serve VRS users. And by providing CAs with more flexibility with respect to their worksite, we will encourage more qualified sign-language interpreters to help provide VRS and thus help provide better service to those with hearing or speech disabilities.

I'd like to thank the following people for their committed and careful work on this matter. From the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Bob Aldrich, Diane Burstein, Eliot Greenwald, Debra Patkin, Michael Scott, and Patrick Webre; from the Enforcement Bureau, Sharon Lee; from the Office of Economics and Analytics, Susan Lee and Virginia Metallo; and from the Office of General Counsel, Terry Cavanaugh, Richard Mallen, and Bill Richardson.