

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Establishing the Digital Opportunity Data Collection*, WC Docket No. 19-195;  
*Modernizing the FCC Form 477 Data Program*, WC Docket No. 11-10.

As we make more and more progress in closing the digital divide it becomes more and more important that we identify with precision the homes and business that still lack access to high-speed Internet service. This will ensure that we target our efforts and focus our universal service programs on extending Internet infrastructure to the families that live and work in those communities.

There is now bipartisan agreement that doing this requires better maps. The FCC's now infamous Form 477 dates back roughly 20 years. It was never designed to produce the type of granular data needed to generate detailed broadband coverage maps. And when the FCC updated Form 477 in years past, it declined to collect data at a more granular level than the census block. That has led to some gaps in our data, as areas without broadband service can be counted as served under the existing approach.

On the bright side, our Form 477 data are good at identifying areas that are completely unserved. And that's why I am glad the FCC is moving ahead with Phase I of the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, which can ensure that Americans living in those unserved areas need not wait any longer than necessary to receive high-speed service.

Going forward, though, we are going to need better data, and that's why Chairman Pai decided in 2017 to start the process that could produce those maps. His early efforts on this front are paying off as the Commission took a pivotal step in 2019 when we adopted the Digital Opportunity Data Collection. This Collection will allow us to develop a nationwide broadband map that will have unprecedented detail.

Congress largely codified those FCC efforts when it passed the Broadband DATA Act in March of 2020. So today we take the next step in our work to stand up detailed coverage maps with the backing and guidance provided by Congress in the DATA Act.

As we do so, I want to thank my colleagues for agreeing to some significant changes to our decision. As originally drafted, the Order imposed essentially two sets of requirements on mobile wireless providers. One set of rules flows largely from mandates Congress included in the DATA Act. Those obligations require carriers to submit standardized predictive propagation maps, and they require details on everything from cell edge probability and cell loading to clutter factors and propagation models.

In a separate section, the draft Order required carriers to provide over a dozen sets of network infrastructure information. Given the potential overlap between those two sets of information collections, I asked my colleagues to move the infrastructure section from the Order to the Further Notice. I very much appreciate that my colleagues agreed to this request because this will allow us some additional time to ensure that any additional infrastructure reporting requirements line up with the information we are already going to collect through our DATA Act requirements. I am also pleased that we have made clear that while this information is of great public importance, providers can still seek confidential treatment for sensitive information.

With these changes, I am happy to vote to approve. So I want to thank the staff of the Wireline Competition Bureau, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, and the Office of Economics and Analytics for their hard work on this item. It has my support.