

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Auction of Flexible-Use Licenses in the 2.5 GHz Band for Next-Generation Wireless Services*,  
Public Notice, AU Docket No. 20-429.

In July 2019, a majority of the Commission voted to advance America's 5G leadership by deciding to both modernize and auction a key swath of mid-band spectrum at 2.5 GHz. In January 2021, the Commission proposed the procedural rules necessary to conduct that auction. These actions were part of the last Administration's efforts to free up an unprecedented amount of mid-band spectrum—and we did so despite significant pushback in nearly every case. We auctioned off 70 MHz of mid-band spectrum at 3.5 GHz. We modernized the rules for 50 MHz of mid-band spectrum at 4.9 GHz. We authorized the use of 30 MHz of mid-band spectrum in the L Band. We opened up 45 MHz of mid-band spectrum at 5.9 GHz. We pushed out an additional 1,200 MHz of mid-band spectrum at 6 GHz. And we successfully auctioned off 280 MHz of mid-band spectrum in the C-Band.

While some might argue that today's 2.5 GHz Public Notice—which largely adopts procedures the agency previously proposed—isn't exactly a headline grabbing decision, for my part I am glad we are taking this last step to get the 2.5 GHz auction across the finish line. Last March, I called for the Commission to complete this auction in 2021, which our January 2021 Public Notice would have enabled—an action that would not have put this auction quite so close to the expiration of our auction authority—but I am pleased we are setting an auction start date now.

Of course, there is a lot more we need to do to stay on track—to meet the pace and cadence of the Commission's prior work on mid-band spectrum. In a speech one year ago this month, I offered up several additional steps that I thought we could get done in 2021. For one, we could authorize very low power devices to operate in the 6 GHz band and also allow client-to-client device communications in that band. For another, we could seek comment on increasing the power levels for CBRS operations in the 3.5 GHz band. For still another, we could start a proceeding to look at updating the rules that apply to unlicensed operations in the mid-band swath of spectrum known as U-NII-2C—perhaps even permitting very low power operations there. And in 2022 and beyond, we could then shift our focus to the Lower 3 GHz band and several additional spectrum bands.

Shifting focus back to the specifics of today's item, I think the Commission's January 2021 proposal to use a simultaneous multi-round (SMR) auction format made a lot of sense, given that we are not dealing with generic or fungible licenses in this auction. Nonetheless, I think it is important that we get going with this auction, so I am voting to approve of the decision to use an ascending clock format.

In closing, I want to thank the staff of the Office of Economics and Analytics and the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau for their work.