
**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS**

Re: *Affordable Connectivity Program*, WC Docket No. 21-450, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (June 8, 2022).

I am pleased to support the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, which begins the process for the Commission to fulfill its statutory mandate to collect data regarding internet service offerings subscribed to by households enrolled in the Affordable Connectivity Program.

Ensuring that all Americans have access to affordable broadband remains my top priority. And it's a shared mission. The Commission's action here is part of a whole-of-government push to expand broadband and ensure that the benefits of our modern economy are available to everyone, including low income individuals. Just last month, I attended an event at the White House with President Biden, Vice President Harris, and many other stakeholders committed to this effort. At that event, the President shared his belief that high-speed internet access is no longer a luxury—it's a necessity.¹ I couldn't agree more.

Ultimately, collecting this data will help inform how the Affordability Connectivity Program is operating, the Commission's understanding of what services are offered, and what consumers prioritize when they subscribe. This level of insight will undoubtedly improve the Program.

I am also aware of the potential sensitivity of some of this data, which is why I am pleased to see that the Commission seeks comment on how best to structure the information collection to meet Congress' requirement to collect and publish certain data, while also protecting against the risk of disclosure of personally identifiable or proprietary information. It is critically important that we get this right, even as we work toward meeting the fast-approaching statutory deadline. I thank the Commission staff for their work on this Notice.

¹ The White House, *Fact Sheet: President Biden and Vice President Harris Reduce High-Speed Internet Costs for Millions of Americans* (May 9, 2022), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/09/fact-sheet-president-biden-and-vice-president-harris-reduce-high-speed-internet-costs-for-millions-of-americans/>.