

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS**

Re: *In the Matter of Space Innovation*, IB Docket No. 22-271; *Facilitating Capabilities for In-space Servicing, Assembly, and Manufacturing*, IB Docket No. 22-272, Notice of Inquiry (August 5, 2022).

We've heard for years that a new in-space economy was right around the corner. Just one more breakthrough or R&D cycle, and it would be within our reach. But space innovation is anything but straightforward. No one, not even the experts, can predict exactly where it will take us, and by when.

But what is evident right now is the incredible pace of progress we're seeing in commercial space. Reusable rockets. Palm-sized satellites. Private human spaceflight—both sub-orbital and to the ISS. Low-cost, high-res imaging. At least four private space stations under U.S. development. Broadband beaming from LEO and MEO as we speak.

At this rate of achievement, when will new frontiers—like in-space servicing, assembly, and manufacturing—finally hit full speed? I can't give you a date certain—again, no one can—but what I can tell you is this. You bet against the U.S. space industry at your own risk.

That's why I'm proud to support today's Notice of Inquiry. The FCC remains the only agency to license virtually every commercial space mission that touches the United States. With that power comes the responsibility to understand the missions we authorize, and to create an enabling regulatory environment that opens new doors while still protecting against new risks. Today's action will help us build the record we need to fully understand emerging ISAM technologies, their spectrum requirements, their debris implications, and how best to situate them within our licensing framework. It's a critical step toward adopting policies that encourage ISAM development—and that keep the U.S. at the forefront of space innovation at the very leading edge.

As we move forward, we must, of course, keep the dialogue going with other agencies. I know that experts at NASA, DoD, Commerce, here at the Commission, and elsewhere in government have been working together on ISAM issues, and that we now have a national strategy to show for their effort. We need to keep it up. These are complex technologies that affect not just the interference and space operating environment, but our national security, economic competitiveness, and the fundamental sustainability of space exploration long term. I'm proud of the expertise we've built on space policy issues in this building, including through the number of ISAM missions we've reviewed and approved already. We should continue to share, and enhance, that expertise through interagency collaboration as we pioneer.

I thank the International Bureau for their hard work on this item, and for their continued leadership tackling new developments in space.