

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRWOMAN JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *AT&T North Carolina and AT&T South Carolina v. Duke Energy Progress, LLC*,
Proceeding No. 20-293, EB-20-MD-004, Order on Reconsideration and Review
(November 17, 2022)

Thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, we now have the largest effort ever to connect everyone, everywhere in this country to high-speed broadband—no matter who they are or where they live. That’s because in the United States we are investing \$65 billion in network deployment, affordability, and availability. It is nothing less than a generational commitment to connectivity for all.

Now grand plans in Washington are one thing. The real work takes place on the ground. You see it clearly in the jobs and infrastructure that is being built all around us. And when it comes to broadband, this infrastructure often takes the form of fiber optic cable strung from utility poles. Many of these poles are owned by local electric companies and phone companies. But when they are used to deploy broadband, other companies may need access to these facilities.

Congress has long recognized that fair access to these poles is important. Providing this access on fair terms helps all kind of providers build and maintain modern communications networks. That’s why Section 224 of the Communications Act gives this agency authority to oversee the rates, terms, and conditions of pole attachments. That also includes the power to adjudicate disputes between pole owners and attachers.

Today we do just that; we resolve a dispute between an electric utility and the local telephone company regarding what is known as a joint use agreement, under which each entity can use the other’s poles. The details are complicated, but the message is simple—the Federal Communications Commission stands ready to do what it can to provide certainty so that disputes like these are resolved, poles are accessed, and high-speed networks are built.

For their work on this infrastructure issue, I’d like to thank Lisa Boehley, Michael Carowitz, Loyaan Egal, Michael Engel, Rosemary McEnery, Lisa Saks, and Raphael Sznajder from the Enforcement Bureau; Rick Mallen, Bill Richardson, and Derek Yeo from the Office of General Counsel; Eugene Kiselev, Richard Kwiatkowski, and Kim Makuch from the Office of Economics and Analytics; and Matt Collins, Adam Copeland, and Michael Ray from the Wireline Competition Bureau.