

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS**

Re: *Expediting Initial Processing of Satellite and Earth Station Applications*, IB Docket No. 22-411;
Space Innovation, IB Docket No. 22-271, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

As I've said before, we're in a golden era of commercial space, and U.S. companies are leading the way. They're fueling discovery and innovation around the world and beyond it, while creating thousands of American jobs, including manufacturing jobs, right here at home. With so many countries seeking to enter the space race, we need to keep the momentum going in the United States. That means finding new ways for government to keep pace with one of the most dynamic sectors in our technological future.

One way to speed things up is to reduce how long it takes to accept applications for filing, and that's why I support this NPRM. In recent years we've seen an unprecedented number of satellite and earth station applications, and many of them contain novel proposals. Operators want to launch megaconstellations, deploy earth stations in motion, and push the envelope on remote sensing missions. They want to relay data to other satellite networks, explore in-space service, assembly, and manufacturing opportunities, and expand the reach of terrestrial IoT networks using satellite connectivity. Some in the industry are working on interoperable user antennas, on beaming satellite connectivity straight to your smartphone, and on democratizing access to the space economy by selling space infrastructure "as a service." Needless to say, our existing rules weren't built with all this in mind, and the NPRM suggests that our requirements for filing acceptability may be delaying the processing of innovative applications. If that is so, we must fix the problem. Applications that show promise still deserve our full consideration on the merits, even if they propose something new that challenges the old playbook. Perhaps even especially so.

I'm also pleased that the Chairwoman and my colleagues supported edits to make the NPRM more practical for space innovators. We should streamline processing for any reasonable application that poses no harm—whether it proposes only to receive signals, or whether it includes a transmission component as well. Furthermore, while we should require applicants to support their claims of non-interference, we shouldn't impose an unreasonably high evidentiary bar just to begin processing the application. That could deter otherwise strong applications, especially from smaller operators. Instead, we should rely on petitions, comments, and other pleadings to help draw out information about the viability of the proposal. That is the regulatory process in action, and there's no harm in using it to help us do our work.

I thank the International Bureau for its excellent work on this item.