

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS**

Re: *In the Matter of 22 Applicants for Rural Digital Opportunity Fund in Default*, Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture.

Today, we adopt the second RDOF default Notice of Apparent Liability in a year, bringing the total number of RDOF applicants that we have proposed to fine for defaulting on their bids to 95. When we originally adopted the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund in 2020, I wrote that we must “create real accountability for companies that receive subsidies” and that there were “warning signs that we should not ignore.”<sup>1</sup> When applicants fail to live up to their obligations in a broadband deployment program, it is a setback for all of us. Defaulting applicants pay a fine, but rural communities that have already waited too long for broadband pay a larger toll. I’m glad that we are holding these companies accountable through our enforcement rules, and hope that these communities will be served by forthcoming broadband deployment programs.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Rural Digital Opportunity Fund; Connect America Fund*, WC Docket Nos. 19-126 and 10-90, Report and Order, 35 FCC Rcd 686, Statement of Commissioner Geoffrey Starks (2020).