

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Unlicensed Use of the 6 GHz Band, Expanding Flexible Use in Mid-Band Spectrum Between 3.7 and 24 GHz*; ET Docket No. 18-295, GN Docket No. 17-183; Second Report and Order and Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (October 19, 2023)

In 2020, the FCC took a historic step to advance U.S. leadership in wireless. Back then, we led the world by opening up the full 6 GHz band for next-generation unlicensed use. By doing so, we effectively increased the amount of mid-band spectrum available for Wi-Fi by almost a factor of five. And by acting early, our 2020 decision ensured that Americans and the businesses that are based here on our shores would benefit from this country's first-mover advantage. The results speak for themselves as consumers here are now benefiting from better, faster Wi-Fi and 5G services in their homes.

The truth is that our action in 6 GHz was part of a broader and forward-thinking approach to spectrum. All told, from 2017 through 2020, the FCC's spectrum efforts opened up more than six gigahertz of spectrum for licensed 5G services in addition to thousands of megahertz of unlicensed spectrum. None of those decisions were easy, but they were all important and for some pretty core reasons.

For one, America's leadership in wireless is vital to our geopolitical interests. When America goes first, the world takes notice. When we free up spectrum, other countries follow suit. And when we are clear about our goals in wireless, it puts the wind at the backs of U.S. officials and our allied stakeholders that are working in international settings to ensure that spectrum bands and technologies develop in ways that work for America's interests—not those of the foreign governments and delegations that do not share our values or goals.

That is why I argued in early 2021 for this new FCC to keep acting on spectrum matters with the same pace and urgency that we did during my first four years on the job. In fact, I detailed a spectrum calendar back in March of 2021 that would ensure America stays on track and keeps leading the world in wireless.

One of the actions I outlined was for the FCC to act that year—in 2021—on authorizing very low power or VLP devices in the full 6 GHz band. VLP operations can unlock even more innovative operations from wearables to augmented and virtual reality.

Unfortunately, the FCC did not act on VLP for over two more years. And that delay has consequences. Again, the U.S. was first to act on the 6 GHz band back in 2020. But in the meantime, something like 50 countries not only caught up to us by authorizing unlicensed operations in 6 GHz, but they moved *faster* than us on authorizing VLP in the band. It is critical for the U.S. to start leading again on wireless.

Now, I am very glad we are unanimous in taking action today in 6 GHz in a way that authorizes VLP operations. But I would have been happy for the FCC to go even further. For instance, I would have preferred for the FCC to address higher power levels for low power indoor or LPI devices today. I would have preferred to move now on authorizing additional power for VLP devices. And I would have preferred authorizing VLP operations in additional portions of the 6 GHz band today. After all, acting on these issues now would have been entirely consistent with both the D.C. Circuit's 2021 decision on 6 GHz as well as the FCC's own 2023 spectrum policy statement. And it would have shown strong spectrum leadership, which would have aided U.S. efforts heading into next month's World Radio Conference in Dubai.

So while the U.S. has been stalling out on spectrum as of late, I am confident that we can get things back on track. One reason is the FCC's talented and dedicated staff. They worked hard on this decision today, and there's no doubt that it tackles many complex and technical matters. So I am very appreciative for their work. And this order has my support. I approve.