

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER OLIVIA TRUSTY**

Re: *Build America: Eliminating Barriers to Wireline Deployments*, WC Docket No. 25-253, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (June 25, 2026).

I have often heard broadband providers identify the time and expense associated with state and local permitting as significant barriers to deployment. At the same time, some providers have also cited examples where they have worked collaboratively with a state or local government to develop solutions that advance both broadband deployment and other local priorities.

When providers and permitting authorities work together in ways that serve both broadband policy goals and the interests of state and local communities, that is a positive outcome. Achieving that outcome consistently, however, has proven to be challenging.

According to the latest data from the Census Bureau, there are more than 90,000 local governments in the United States. FCC data indicate that, as of June 2025, more than 2,000 broadband providers operate nationwide. While not every provider interacts with every jurisdiction, those figures underscore the sheer number of relationships involved and the many opportunities for misunderstandings, delays, and disputes to arise.

I prefer a more optimistic perspective. I see opportunities for those interactions to succeed—for permitting authorities to create a path for timely and efficient broadband deployment and for providers to follow through on commitments to bring the connectivity communities need while also ensuring that rights-of-way are responsibly maintained for the benefit of everyone who relies on them. I view this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking as an important step in that direction.

Clear rules explaining how the Commission interprets and applies Section 253 can provide a more predictable framework for discussions between providers and permitting authorities, helping both sides reach workable solutions before disagreements escalate into litigation. Such rules can also offer valuable guidance to jurisdictions with less experience processing communications infrastructure applications or with limited staff resources. And when unreasonable costs or delays do occur, clear rules can provide a more direct path forward for the Commission and the courts to take corrective action consistent with federal law.

By proceeding through notice-and-comment rulemaking, the Commission can benefit from a broader range of perspectives than would be available through individual preemption proceedings. I look forward to hearing from providers, state and local governments, consumer advocates, and other stakeholders as we work to fulfill our responsibilities under the Communications Act.

I also look forward to reviewing the record developed in this proceeding and to working with Congress as it considers additional permitting reforms. I thank the staff of the Wireline Competition Bureau for their excellent work on this item.