

Statement of Brendan Carr
Nominee to Serve as Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission
Before the United State Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee

July 19, 2017

Chairman Thune, Ranking Member Nelson, and distinguished Members of the Committee, it is a privilege to appear before you today. I am humbled by President Trump's decision to nominate me to serve as a Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission, and I am honored to have this Committee consider that nomination.

I want to start by thanking you and your staffs for the courtesies you have shown me over the past few weeks and for giving me the opportunity to learn more about the technology and communications issues that are important to you and your states. These meetings have only underscored the important role the FCC plays in the lives of all Americans—whether it is promoting broadband deployment, protecting consumers, or advancing public safety. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to work with all of you on ways the FCC can continue to advance the public interest.

With the Committee's indulgence, I would like to take a moment to introduce my family—my wonderful wife Machalagh and our two terrific boys: Quinn, who is three years old, and Emmet, who is six months. We are just blessed to be their parents. I also want to introduce my parents, Thomas Carr and Barbara Carr, as well as my sister Courtney Carr, and thank them for the support they have always shown me.

I also want to extend my congratulations to Chairman Pai and Commissioner Rosenworcel on their renominations. I have had the chance to work with both of them, as well as Commissioner Clyburn and Commissioner O'Rielly, for a number of years at the FCC, and I know they are all exceptionally thoughtful and dedicated public servants.

I currently have the privilege of serving as the FCC's General Counsel. It is an honor and a tremendously rewarding experience to lead the talented lawyers and other professionals that work in the Office of General Counsel.

But this is not the first job I have had at the FCC. I joined the Commission as a staffer over five years ago. I worked initially as an attorney in the Administrative Law Division of the Office of General Counsel. My job was to provide advice to the policymakers in the agency's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, and International Bureau. Later, I had the chance to work on those same issues as an advisor to then Commissioner Pai.

My passion for technology and communications started well before I joined the agency, however. In fact, I went to law school over fifteen years ago for the purpose of studying telecommunications law and policy. I obtained a certificate in communications law studies in addition to my J.D.

During law school, I took the opportunity to intern twice at the FCC and once with the U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, and the Internet. Those experiences only confirmed that I made the right decision to study communications law, and they solidified my interest in spending my career working as a lawyer on communications issues.

After graduating, I accepted a job at a law firm where I could gain broad experience working on various telecommunications issues. Later, I accepted a clerkship with a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, which helped spark my interest in public service and instilled in me the importance of considering all sides of any debate.

I have learned a lot over the past dozen years working on communications law and policy. I have come to know and admire the FCC's terrific staff. They are passionate about delivering for the public interest, and they truly are the agency's best asset.

My time at the Commission has also instilled in me an appreciation for the importance of bipartisan consensus and working towards common ground. I believe that focusing on our shared goals produces the best and lasting results for the public. I hope that my work at the FCC and my interactions with all stakeholders over the years have reflected my commitment to that approach. I can assure you that, if confirmed, I would work in that spirit as a Commissioner.

I can also assure this Committee that, if confirmed, I would approach the job with an appreciation for the challenges we face and a determination to help solve them. In terms of my regulatory philosophy, I believe that the public interest is best served by vigorous competition in the marketplace. But when there are marketplace failures that harm consumers, the agency must take action consistent with the scope of our authority and the direction provided by Congress. We must always be willing to take a fresh look at any barriers to entry or competition that we can remove, and we must ensure that our regulatory framework supports innovation and entrepreneurship, reflects the realities of today's dynamic marketplace, and always promotes the public interest.

With that in mind, I want to talk briefly about the focus I would bring to the Commission, if confirmed.

We have a tremendous opportunity in the technology and communications space to create jobs, spur investment, and grow the economy for the benefit all Americans. If confirmed, I would work to ensure that the FCC's policies do just that.

Broadband is certainly going to play a key role. Whether it is the app economy that runs over high-speed networks, the workers who deploy and make network infrastructure, or the businesses that use these connections to reach customers around the world, broadband can harness the talents of all Americans, create good-paying jobs, and help drive our nation's economic growth. So it is critical that we have policies in place that promote the construction and expansion of broadband networks in all parts of our country.

I also believe it is important to maintain the United States' leadership in wireless. The wireless market in the United States has been a tremendous success story. The policies the FCC

put in place a decade ago resulted in this country leading the world in the deployment of 4G wireless technologies. The current challenge is to ensure that we maintain that leadership as 5G and other advanced and competitive wireless networks (terrestrial and satellite alike) come online.

Spectrum and infrastructure are going to play key roles in determining whether we meet that challenge. On the spectrum front, the FCC must continue to pursue an all-of-the-above approach. We need a spectrum pipeline that can deliver a mix of low-, mid-, and high-band spectrum into the commercial marketplace. And we need to ensure that providers can choose from a mix of licensed, unlicensed, and shared spectrum bands to meet consumer demand, whether to connect people or the burgeoning Internet of Things. On the infrastructure side, the FCC must make certain that its policies are tailored to facilitating next-generation deployments.

Finally, while technology continues to evolve, one constant is the FCC's obligation to promote public safety. This includes taking steps to facilitate the transition to Next-Generation 911 (or NG911), which can bring life-saving advances to those in need of emergency services and innovative solutions to our public safety community. It also means that the FCC must play its part in ensuring that public safety officials and first responders have access to the advanced communications technologies that will allow them to do their jobs safely and effectively. I believe that all stakeholders must work together to ensure that the agency is fulfilling its public safety obligations.

Chairman Thune, Ranking Member Nelson, and Members of the Committee, I want to thank you again for considering my nomination. I look forward to answering your questions.