

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Technology Transitions*, GN Docket No. 13-5; *AT&T Petition to Launch a Proceeding Concerning the TDM-to-IP Transition*, GN Docket No. 12-353; *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90; *Structure and Practices of the Video Relay Service Program*, CG Docket No. 10-51; *Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities*, CG Docket No. 03-123; *Numbering Policies for Modern Communications*, WC Docket No. 13-97.

Communications networks are changing at a blistering pace. Nothing demonstrates the speed and scope of this change like some simple raw numbers. At the turn of the millennium, we had roughly 200 million switched access lines—or traditional phone lines. By the start of this year, we had only 96 million. On top of that, we had 42 million VoIP lines—an increase of nearly 80 percent since 2008. Add to this the fact that two in five households have now cut the cord and only use a wireless phone—and you get a sense of the change that is roiling our communications landscape.

Grappling with so much change is neither simple nor easy. The task is big, so here we start small. We start in what I like to think of as the sandbox.

Software developers often code sandboxes into their programs. This code allows others access to a portion of the program without harming the host platform. It provides an opportunity to experiment within the program, minimizing risk before introducing ideas at broader scale.

Sandbox thinking is popular among start-ups in Silicon Valley. But why not put it to use in Washington? After all, testing big ideas in a small way is a good way to understand the consequences of our policy choices—and the impact they have on consumers—before unleashing them in the world at large.

That is what we do here, by inviting a range of sandbox trials to assess how to migrate the networks we rely on today to the digital possibilities of tomorrow. I think this is the right approach for the IP transition issues before this Commission. So our work here has my support.

But as we navigate these changes with our eyes firmly on the future, our efforts must be informed by the values of our past. As I have suggested from the start, there are four enduring values in communications law—public safety, universal access, competition, and consumer protection. These are our guideposts in everything we do. Technology changes, but our values do not. So I thank the Chairman and my colleagues for including this framework in the work we do here.

Ultimately, we will need to take these values and build beyond sandbox experimentation. I am confident that we will find technology is up to the task. I am also confident that smart policy experts at the federal and state level can craft a framework that inspires investment in digital age infrastructure. But I think we must be mindful of the impact this transition has on consumers—their needs, their expectations, and their willingness to embrace network change. Going forward, I believe all stakeholders have work to do.

Finally, I want to thank the Chairman for tackling this issue with gusto and speed. Big change is already underway. It is time to wrestle with it and make sure our new networks yield new possibilities for everyone. Thank you also to the many Bureaus and Offices that contributed to this effort today and undoubtedly will help us navigate these issues in the future.