

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Elimination of Main Studio Rule*, MB Docket No. 17-106.

Back in May, when we released the *Notice* in this proceeding, I observed that broadcast studios and the purposes they serve have changed a lot since 1920, when the first commercial radio broadcast took place, and since 1939, when the FCC first adopted main studio requirements. That's why the FCC proposed to eliminate the main studio rule.

The overwhelming majority of public input favored our proposal. The record shows that main studios are no longer needed to enable broadcasters to be responsive to their communities of license. That's because the public these days is much more likely to interact with stations (including accessing stations' public files) online. Additionally, technology allows broadcast stations to produce local news even without a nearby studio.

The record also shows that getting rid of the rule will help broadcasters serve viewers and listeners, especially those in small towns and rural areas where the cost of compliance dissuades broadcasters from even launching stations. One commenter, for example, stated that after FM Auction 94, it decided not to construct stations in South Dakota and Montana because of the costs associated with the main studio rule.¹ The record further demonstrates that eliminating this rule will enable broadcasters to focus more resources on local programming, newsgathering, community outreach, equipment upgrades, and attracting talent—all of which will better serve their communities. Given these facts, continuing to require a main studio would detract from, rather than promote, a broadcaster's ability and incentive to keep people informed and serve the public interest.

Thank you to Michelle Carey, Martha Heller, and Diana Sokolow from the Media Bureau, and David Konczal from the Office of General Counsel, for your work on this *Order*.

¹ See Jackman/Sebago Comments at 2-3.