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**Statement of Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr., as prepared for delivery  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology  
Hearing on “Oversight of the Federal Communications Commission”**

Thank you Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Eshoo. And thank you to all five Commissioners for testifying today. I will keep my statement short to give others a chance to speak as well.

Anyone who thought the FCC would slow down this year certainly underestimated the agency. The Commission has teed up an impressive number of important issues, including the incentive auction set to launch next week. The auction counts as one of the most ambitious efforts the agency has ever undertaken. The airwaves that can be freed up through this auction—both licensed and unlicensed—will ensure consumers feel the full power of the mobile revolution.

But as important as it is to help consumers of mobile services, the auction can only be considered successful if it works for broadcast viewers as well. Back in New Jersey, we understand the importance of a seamless transition after the auction—because disasters like Hurricane Sandy can strike at any time. And when they do, viewers depend on their local broadcasters.

Fortunately, all five FCC Commissioners have committed to ensuring viewers do not lose signal as a result of the repacking process. That is why I drafted the Viewer Protection Act to give them all the tools they need to keep this commitment. This bill will prevent viewers’ TVs from going dark while also ensuring consumers of mobile broadband benefit from the incentive auction as soon as possible. I hope to introduce this important bill soon because it is never too early to think about what happens after the bidding is over.

Hurricane Sandy also showed the importance of phones in an emergency. When the hurricane hit New Jersey, we did not just watch our televisions or listen to our radios, but we also looked to our mobile phones. Unfortunately, too many of those devices let us down when we needed them most.

That is why I introduced the SANDy Act so that we are better prepared the next time disaster strikes. The SANDy Act has a number of commonsense proposals to improve access to communications in a disaster. For instance, the SANDy Act would help ensure that customers of any wireless carrier can get signal, even if their own carrier’s service goes down. No one should

be left without any bars on their phone when a compatible network is still working. The bill would also create a database of critical personnel to keep public safety officials and the carriers in better touch during an emergency—when every second counts.

I have been in close contact with both Chairman Wheeler and the carriers to talk about how to get this done. And I want to thank them both for taking these issues so seriously. I am optimistic that we are close to a breakthrough that will put us in a better position for when the next disaster strikes.

Again, I thank the Chairman and Commissioners for being here today. I look forward to today's discussion.

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