

**TESTIMONY OF BRENDAN CARR
CHAIRMAN, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

**BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT
OF THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

“Oversight Hearing of the Federal Communications Commission”

May 21, 2025

Chairman Joyce, Ranking Member Hoyer, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, it is an honor to appear before you today. Since joining the FCC, I have had the privilege of testifying before a number of House and Senate Committees, including in front of this Subcommittee last year. But this is my first time appearing before Congress as the Chairman of the FCC. So, I want to thank you for the invitation to testify. I look forward to sharing with you the priorities we have been advancing at the FCC since January, updating you on our budgetary actions, and discussing the priorities I would like to pursue in Fiscal Year 2026.

Since this is my first time testifying as Chairman and there are new members of the Subcommittee this Congress, I want to start with a brief introduction. I first joined the FCC as a staffer back in 2012, and I have had the privilege of serving in a number of different roles at the agency—from an attorney in the agency’s Office of General Counsel to a legal advisor for a Commissioner and then General Counsel of the FCC before being nominated to serve as Commissioner in 2017. Over these past dozen years, I have had the honor of working alongside some of the most talented public servants in the federal government. I am proud of the work they get done for the American people.

It has been a particularly busy time at the FCC since Inauguration Day, when President Trump designated me as Chairman of the agency. We have hit the ground running, and I’d like to highlight some of the Commission’s critical work under my leadership thus far.

To start, we have already taken steps to unleash new high-speed infrastructure builds. We have done so by making it easier for providers to retire aging, copper-line networks and invest resources into fast, modern ones instead. We also clarified that tower construction projects could proceed without going through additional and onerous review processes. We streamlined other procedures as well.

During the first few months, the FCC has also taken steps to restore America’s leadership in wireless and free up more spectrum up for consumer use. This is important because getting more spectrum into the commercial marketplace drives down prices for the American people, increases competition, and advances America’s national security interests. To that end, we launched a new proceeding that looks at freeing up a large swath of prime, mid-band spectrum in the C-Band. We also started a proceeding to explore new and creative ways that we could allow more intensive use of spectrum in the 37 GHz band.

Beyond studying spectrum, we also kicked off the process of auctioning AWS-3 licenses

after Congress authorized the FCC to conduct the auction. The proceeds of this auction will be used to help facilitate the “Rip-and-Replace” program, which removes dangerous and insecure Huawei and ZTE gear from our nation’s critical telecommunications infrastructure. This is a win-win: the FCC is making more prime, mid-band spectrum available, and we are moving the ball forward on a longstanding, bipartisan national security priority.

More broadly, though, it is important that Congress restore the FCC’s spectrum auction authority. As I wrote in a letter to Congressional leaders earlier this year,¹ U.S. leadership in wireless is about more than connectivity. It is part and parcel of America’s geopolitical leadership and national security. When we free up spectrum, the world takes notice. It puts the wind at the backs of those working to advance our values. It ensures that next-generation wireless services develop in ways that will benefit our innovators and interests—rather than regimes that seek to diminish America’s standing in the world. It lets America drive the important standard-setting process, rather than taking the results that our adversaries would dish out. And it ensures that Huawei and ZTE do not dominate the development of vital, next-generation services.

Auctioning spectrum is also good for the U.S. Treasury and our national funding priorities. Indeed, the FCC has held 100 auctions over the years and raised more than \$233 billion in revenues. In fact, FCC spectrum auctions consistently exceed revenue estimates—by multiples in many cases. So, restoring FCC auction authority via a robust pipeline of mid-band spectrum is one of the most important steps that Congress can take in the near term.

Shifting from spectrum, the FCC has also focused on boosting America’s space economy. This is an area where the FCC must continue to move faster and with greater efficiency. The agency must match the pace and cadence of America’s leading satellite, rocket, and space companies. Since becoming Chairman, we have taken steps designed to do just that. For instance, we streamlined the FCC approval process for earth station siting requests to reduce burdens on satellite companies and ensure the agency can move faster as more of these requests come in. These changes allowed us to process 85 space station and 904 earth station applications in just the first 100 days alone. We also took action to enable faster and more robust direct-to-cell service by allowing providers to operate on spectrum at higher power levels. And we approved a breakthrough demonstration of live video calls between mobile devices using a satellite network.

Consistent with my goals as Chairman to encourage innovation and deliver efficient results, the FCC launched a massive deregulatory effort titled, “In Re: Delete, Delete, Delete.” Right now, the FCC is doing a top to bottom review of every rule, regulation, and guidance document for the purpose of eliminating unnecessary regulatory burdens. We received great feedback from a range of stakeholders already and plan on eliminating onerous, antiquated, and unlawful requirements across the board.

In parallel with our aggressive economic agenda, the FCC has also taken important steps to

¹See Letter from Brendan Carr, Chairman, FCC to Ted Cruz, Chair, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, United States Senate, Brett Guthrie, Chair, Committee on Energy and Commerce, United States House of Representatives, Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, United States Senate, and Frank Pallone, Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce, United States House of Representatives (Mar 12, 2025), <http://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-410265A1.pdf>.

protect consumers. Since I became Chairman, the FCC has expanded its work to combat illegal robocalls and bolster our call blocking rules. We have also proposed a new framework that can ensure caller ID authentication solutions are extended to calls transmitted over non-IP networks. And we have proposed rules to protect consumers from excessively loud commercials. Consumer protection will continue to be a pillar of the FCC's work under my leadership.

The FCC is also taking steps to enhance our national security and public safety. At the beginning of my time as Chairman, I created a new Council on National Security within the FCC to leverage all of the agency's authorities and relevant work streams to counter the threats posed by foreign adversaries. The Council is already hard at work investigating the ongoing U.S. operations of businesses that were previously placed on the FCC's Covered List due to their national security risks. We are also looking to address other significant vulnerabilities. For instance, we are looking at backups or alternatives to our GPS system to enhance national security and economic resilience. And we are promoting America's public safety systems by ensuring that emerging, Next Gen 911 networks are reliable and interoperable and by improving wireless 911 location accuracy rules.

While this is not an exhaustive list of the FCC's work over these past few months, it does demonstrate the important work that the FCC's talented staff have been accomplishing.

And we have been delivering these results with a focus on efficiency. At the beginning of Fiscal Year 2025, the FCC employed 1,461 full-time employees. As of April 28, 2025, the FCC employed 1,383 full-time employees. The difference over the last six months can be attributed to many factors, including FCC employees who took advantage of the early retirement window opened by my predecessor, the deferred resignation program offered by President Trump, and natural turnover. The agency is well positioned to continue carrying out its statutory mission for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2025 and beyond.

With respect to our current budget, the FCC is operating successfully under the Continuing Resolution's Fiscal Year 2024 S&E level of \$390,192,000. As President Trump and Congress finalize the FCC's fee-funded Fiscal Year 2026 budget, the agency will keep delivering great and efficient results for the American public by accelerating infrastructure builds, promoting America's wireless leadership, expanding our space economy, eliminating needless regulations, protecting consumers, and promoting national security and public safety.

While making progress on those priorities, the FCC will also find opportunities to eliminate waste and improve efficiency. We have already started this process, and, so far, found more than \$6.7 million in savings for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2025. We have also reduced the FCC's authorized contract spending ceiling amount by more than \$567 million. A lot of our savings have come from reviewing and modifying bloated and duplicative IT contracts. These savings have had real results for the FCC, and the agency is on sustainable financial footing.

We have also improved efficiency inside the FCC. I have touched on streamlining processes, but another big efficiency driver was simply returning the talented FCC staff back to the office. When I started as Chairman, we estimate that 98 percent of covered FCC employees still routinely teleworked using COVID-era policies—including showing up in person just one

day a week or less. Now, that number is nearly inverted: over 92 percent of staff are required to be back to full-time work in the office. I try to walk two floors of the FCC building every day to hear directly from our talented teams and get ideas that we can act on. When I started this initiative, before everyone returned to the office, the floors were mostly empty. Now, the floors are full and our hardworking staff professionals are driving the agency's agenda forward. I have heard on these walks that people feel more collaborative and productive now that their colleagues are only a few steps away. Silos that can develop in fully remote environments are not constraining our teams in the same ways. And the agency's longstanding culture of teamwork and collaboration is getting even stronger.

I very much look forward to the great results that this FCC team will deliver over the coming months and years.

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In closing, Chairman Joyce, Ranking Member Hoyer, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to answering your questions.