

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS**

Re: *Incentive Auction of Upper Microwave Flexible-Use Service Licenses in the Upper 37 GHz, 39 GHz, and 47 GHz for Next-Generation Wireless Services*, AU Docket No. 19-59.

A Public Notice announcing auction procedures may not seem like the most exciting event, but this item is a big deal. When Auction 103 takes place, it will be the largest spectrum auction in FCC history – 3,400 megahertz. And the spectrum involved promises to be a key component in the 5G revolution that will take place over the next 5 to 10 years. With this auction, we are one step closer to seeing a wave of technological changes in our everyday lives – from remote medical examinations, to self-driving cars, to virtual and augmented reality, to applications that we can’t even imagine yet.

With new technology comes the responsibility to ensure that we have the right regulatory approach. In making new spectrum available, we must think creatively about how to encourage both the participation of new market entrants and new ways to use that resource. I’m particularly pleased with two major components of the approach here.

First, this is the first Commission auction that will offer multiple millimeter wave bands together. Auctioning off so much spectrum in multiple bands at the same time encourages participation by an expanded group of parties – not only the large national carriers, but regional carriers, fixed wireless providers, and even companies looking to provide specialized IoT services. Moreover, the amount of spectrum and variety of bands provides bidders with the flexibility to choose the best combination of spectrum for their particular needs.

Second, it adopts, for only the second time, an incentive auction format to encourage incumbents to relinquish their spectrum rights in exchange for compensation. Much of this spectrum was assigned years ago but hasn’t seen meaningful deployment. An incentive auction will be an efficient way to get spectrum into the hands of those best positioned to use it today while compensating the original licensees. I’m intrigued by this approach and look forward to seeing the results, as well as how it might work in other contexts.

Congratulations to the Office of Economics and Analytics for completing your first meeting item. Thank you for your work on this, and I look forward to working with all of you moving forward.