

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Auctions of Upper Microwave Flexible Use Licenses for Next-Generation Wireless Services; Comment Sought on Competitive Bidding Procedures for Auctions 101 (28 GHz) and 102 (24 GHz); Bidding in Auction 101 Scheduled to Begin November 14, 2018, AU Docket No. 18-85.*

The recent Winter Olympics included many “firsts.” It was the first Winter Games hosted by South Korea. It was the first time the United States won a gold medal in curling. And most relevant to our work, it was the first Olympics to debut 5G technology, the next generation of wireless connectivity.

The FCC has been working hard to do what we need to do to ensure American leadership in 5G. Last month, we updated our wireless infrastructure rules to make sure that the physical networks of the future can exist. And this month, we turn our attention to 5G’s invisible building blocks by kicking off the spectrum auction process. As I announced in February, the FCC intends to hold in November an auction of spectrum in the 28 GHz band, followed immediately thereafter by an auction of spectrum in the 24 GHz band.

To meet that timeline, we need to move quickly. And that’s what we are doing today. We set the foundation for America’s first millimeter-wave auctions by seeking input on application and bidding procedures for the auction of 28 GHz and 24 GHz licenses. It may not be flashy, but this is a vital step toward promoting U.S. innovation in 5G wireless services, the Internet of Things, and many technological “firsts” in these previously-underused, high-band frequencies.

It’s also important to mention that we will be able to commence spectrum auctions later this year because of recent legislative action. I’m grateful to Congress for passing, and the President for signing, legislation fixing a technical problem involving upfront payments by auction bidders for spectrum. While this problem stood in the way of the FCC holding a major spectrum auction, I’m grateful that we were able to roll up our sleeves and work together with Congress and the Executive Branch to remove this roadblock. And we intend to take advantage of this cleared lane. After completing auctions for the 28 GHz and 24 GHz bands, we anticipate auctioning additional bands in the near future.

I’d like to thank the staff who worked on this item: Erik Beith, Craig Bromberger, Steve Buenzow, Chas Eberle, Katie Hinton, William Huber, Gary Michaels, Linda Sanderson, John Schauble, Blaise Scinto, Martha Stancill, Sue Sterner, Don Stockdale, Joel Taubenblatt, and Margie Weiner from the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, and Laurence Atlas, David Horowitz, Bill Richardson, and Anjali Singh from the Office of General Counsel. We will continue to rely on your expertise as we approach the November 14 start of the 28 GHz auction.