

STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS

Re: *Spectrum Requirements for the Internet of Things*, ET Docket No. 21-353

The Internet of Things is transforming our economy and our way of life. The American Smart Home market, which involves connected devices ranging from thermostats to doorbells and security systems, is on track to generate [\\$29 billion](#) this year. IoT has enabled doctors and hospitals to monitor patient health via connected medical devices, rather than requiring an in-person exam. Businesses have rapidly integrated Industrial IoT into their operations to track manufacturing processes and machinery in real-time. Farmers are using precision agriculture to increase efficiency and save resources. I'm particularly excited about how cities like my hometown of Kansas City have installed IoT sensors integrated with AI to reduce traffic congestion and energy consumption. Indeed, earlier this month, Congresswoman Yvette Clarke introduced [legislation](#) to renew the Department of Transportation's Smart City challenge, which would award grants to communities that integrate IoT technologies into city planning initiatives and demonstrate how they can mitigate transportation challenges and improve safety and sustainability.

These are all impressive developments, and this proceeding is an important step towards ensuring that adequate and appropriate spectrum is available for IoT to realize its full potential. Even as we address this important issue, however, we must acknowledge that many Americans will not realize the benefits of IoT; until broadband service is available and affordable to everyone, those without broadband will be left behind during the IoT revolution. That's why my number one priority at the Commission remains addressing the problem of internet inequality and the digital divide. The growing importance of the Internet of Things is one more example of why the Commission must continue to focus on connecting all Americans.

Moreover, as I've discussed previously, as IoT becomes dominant in various sectors, it will eliminate many jobs that are predominantly occupied by women or people of color. For example, increased automation and digitalization in manufacturing, agricultural supply chains, and inventory management can eliminate jobs held disproportionately by these groups. Thus, even as we encourage IoT's growth, we must also acknowledge and address the need to train and reskill our fellow Americans so they can fill the jobs of tomorrow. This will require a whole-of-nation approach to continue to build the skilled workforce our modern economy needs.

Thank you to the staff in OET for their hard work on this item.