

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS**

Re: *Establishing the Digital Opportunity Data Collection, Modernizing the FCC Form 477 Data Program*; WC Docket Nos. 19-195, 11-10 Fourth Report and Order, Declaratory Ruling, and Fourth Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

The Commission has made impressive progress to create, and continually improve, our Broadband Data Collection maps since Congress adopted the Broadband DATA Act in 2020. Working together, the Commission, along with service providers, states, and the public, have built a fabric of broadband serviceable locations throughout the United States, and identified millions of locations that are served and those that are not. The programs that rely on our maps, such as the Universal Service Fund high-cost program and NTIA's \$42 billion Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program, are unquestionably more effective as a result.

This Order, Declaratory Ruling, and Fourth Further Notice is another smart step toward our goal to make our maps even more accurate. We codify the challenge process deadline as required by statute; clarify that our rules allow a provider to demonstrate that it now serves a location that was previously removed from our map through the challenge, verification, or audit process; and seek comment on rules to further improve our data validation, among other things. I am particularly interested to see the record develop on improving our data surrounding satellite broadband coverage and how to better identify where terrestrial fixed wireless providers are providing service.