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For Immediate Release

CHAIRMAN WHEELER STATEMENT ON MUNICIPAL BROADBAND COURT DECISION

WASHINGTON, August 10, 2016 – Federal Communications Commission Chairman Tom Wheeler issued the following statement today on the Sixth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals decision reversing the FCC’s 2015 action in support of local broadband projects.

“While we continue to review the decision, it appears to halt the promise of jobs, investment and opportunity that community broadband has provided in Tennessee and North Carolina. In the end, I believe the Commission’s decision to champion municipal efforts highlighted the benefits of competition and the need of communities to take their broadband futures in their own hands.

“In the past 18 months, over 50 communities have taken steps to build their own bridges across the digital divide. The efforts of communities wanting better broadband should not be thwarted by the political power of those who, by protecting their monopoly, have failed to deliver acceptable service at an acceptable price. The FCC’s mandate is to make sure that Americans have access to the best possible broadband. We will consider all our legal and policy options to remove barriers to broadband deployment wherever they exist so that all Americans can have access to 21st Century communications.

“Should states seek to repeal their anti-competitive broadband statutes, I will be happy to testify on behalf of better broadband and consumer choice. Should states seek to limit the right of people to act for better broadband, I will be happy to testify on behalf of consumer choice.”

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).