

STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER MIGNON L. CLYBURN
RE: Chairman Wheeler's Announced Departure
December 15, 2016

Where to begin? The "Bo Jackson of Telecom" as President Obama once said. I seem to be stuck in this sports analogy vortex today, so I will keep it going.

Whether you agreed with him or not, Tom Wheeler, my chairman, has made a bold impact on this agency and this ecosystem. Maybe we should not really be surprised: his years of experience with industry, his ability to make tough decisions, and his willingness to fiercely stand up for and protect his client. Fortunately for all of us, since late fall of 2013, the American consumer has been the direct beneficiary of his quest for competition, competition, competition and consumer protection.

Personally, Tom Wheeler, you have helped to make me a better Commissioner. You have both challenged and assisted me to advance key priorities that will continue to make a difference in the lives of millions.

Following more than 4 million public comments, under your leadership we adopted open Internet rules grounded in the strongest legal framework possible. Those rules were upheld by the D.C. Circuit earlier this year.

Under your leadership, we finally modernized Lifeline, a three-decade old program that is on the cusp of more efficiently meeting the needs of those who would most benefit in a 21st century America. Low-income Americans have affordable options for high-speed broadband, which could mean a new lease on life when it comes to applying for jobs, accessing telehealth services, and much more.

I could go on, Mr. Chairman, but let me conclude by saying how incredibly grateful I am for your leadership and friendship. Thank you for standing up, speaking out and serving nobly.