

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Authorizing Permissive Use of the “Next Generation” Broadcast Television Standard*, GN
Docket No. 16-142

When it comes to technology, the United States has led the world in innovation. And our greatest advancements have developed free from the heavy-hand of government intervention. For its part, the FCC has been moving steadily away from dictating the use of particular technologies or intervening in the standards-setting process.

We see this perhaps most prominently in the wireless sector. The Commission has adopted flexible use licenses, allowed providers to sunset their analog networks, let them shut down devices after transition periods, and steered clear of mandating the use of specific technologies. This approach has proven to be a tremendous success for American consumers by allowing providers the flexibility to deploy the latest wireless technologies. The results of this pro-innovation approach speak for themselves.

Today, we move slowly in that direction by allowing broadcasters to use a new standard for Next Generation TV, known as ATSC 3.0. By granting their request, we give broadcasters the freedom to innovate—a freedom that their competitors and many others in the tech sector already enjoy. And we enable consumers to realize the benefits of this innovation. The Next Generation TV standard has the potential to dramatically improve free over-the-air television service by delivering higher quality picture and sound, advanced emergency alerts that can provide time-sensitive warnings to consumers, and new accessibility features. That is why a broad range of stakeholders from the Consumer Technology Association to public television stations support the flexibility we provide with today’s decision.

Now, some have tried to stoke fears at the last minute, suggesting that today’s Order will foist increased costs on consumers in the form of new TVs or higher cable bills. But these bogeymen are just that. Here’s the reality: in this item, we adopt numerous measures that protect consumers and other stakeholders. And we ensure that this voluntary transition will be driven by market forces and consumer demand, not an FCC mandate. We do not force consumers to buy new equipment. Instead, we require broadcasters to continue transmitting their signals in the existing ATSC 1.0 standard, so consumers can keep using their existing TVs. We do not mandate that MVPDs carry ATSC 3.0 signals. Rather, we make clear that MVPDs are under no statutory or regulatory obligation to carry such signals. And we do not adopt a Next Generation TV tuner requirement. Instead, we rely on consumer demand to determine when and if ATSC 3.0 tuners will be included in TVs or other devices.

I look forward to the innovation to come, and this Order has my support. I thank the staff of the Media Bureau and the Office of Engineering and Technology for their diligent work on this item.