



NEWS

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See *MCI v. FCC*, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

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STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER AJIT PAI ON THE FORMATION OF A TECHNOLOGY TRANSITIONS POLICY TASK FORCE

The Internet Transformation is upon us. The analog, circuit-switched copper-wire networks that dominated the 20th century communications marketplace are being replaced by competitive fiber networks that digitally distribute voice, video, and data services. Yet our rules continue to presume static domination by monopoly providers. We need a forward-looking regulatory framework that will expedite the Internet Protocol (IP) transition and accommodate—indeed, encourage—the most important technological revolution of our time.

I first called for the FCC to establish a task force to tackle this problem almost five months ago.¹ Today, I commend the Chairman for doing just that with the announcement of the Technology Transitions Policy Task Force's formation. The Task Force will help us address this challenge in a comprehensive manner rather than handling issues on a piecemeal basis as they happen to pop up.

Our judgments have a firmer foundation when we have the benefit of a broad range of public perspectives. So I hope that the Task Force will solicit input from all interested parties. And I hope that all Commissioners' offices will engage with the Task Force and have the opportunity to participate in its work.

Our goal in this effort should be as simple as it is profound: to develop sound proposals for hastening the IP transition and incentivizing investment in next-generation networks. In developing those proposals, the Task Force should keep certain core principles in mind, such as the need to preserve vital consumer protections—like 911 emergency calling—that are still likely to be needed in an all-IP world. Similarly, the Task Force should resist the urge to simply import the rules of the old world into the new. Instead, it should scour the Code of Federal Regulations to track down and remove obsolete legacy regulations, like the tariffs, the arcane cost studies, and the hidden subsidies that distort competition for the benefit of companies, rather than consumers.

The Technology Transitions Policy Task Force is a big deal. Without question, the legal and policy challenges involved will be substantial, as will be the demands on our talented staff.

¹ See Remarks of Commissioner Ajit Pai, "Unlocking Investment and Innovation in the Digital Age: Toward a 21st-Century FCC" at 6-7 (July 18, 2012), *available at* http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-315268A1.pdf.

But so too could be the rewards. If we get this right—if we can establish a modern, deregulatory framework for the dynamic, competitive IP world—innovation will flourish, infrastructure investment will increase, and American consumers will benefit even more fully from the bounty of the digital age.