

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *March 8th, 2017 AT&T VoLTE 911 Outage Report and Recommendations*, PS Docket No. 17-68.

On March 8, 12,539 Americans who were AT&T customers tried to call 911. But they couldn't reach emergency services because of a nationwide outage of AT&T's VoLTE 911 network. When they placed that call, they heard fast busy signals, endless ringing, or silence.

This was unacceptable. In times of trouble, Americans in need must be able to reach Americans who can help. That's why as soon as this outage occurred, I directed the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau to investigate.

Today, the Bureau has delivered a thorough, fact-based report of its findings. These findings are based on data derived from the FCC's network outage reporting system and numerous interviews with officials from AT&T, subcontractors Comtech and West, as well as several affected public safety answering points or PSAPs, including the Office of Unified Communications here in Washington, DC.

The findings are highly instructive. Most importantly, this outage could have been prevented. It was the result of mistakes made by AT&T. The Bureau's report shows that there were shortfalls in operational redundancies, risk assessment, and stakeholder and consumer outreach. Had AT&T followed certain best practices as outlined by the FCC's Communications Security, Reliability and Interoperability Council, this outage would have had much less impact. Indeed, the cause of the outage could and should have been identified and addressed with periodic audits of the network.

That's the bad news. The good news is that AT&T has now addressed the vulnerabilities that led to this outage. Had these safeguards been in place on March 8, it is exceedingly unlikely that this outage would have occurred.

Going forward, I urge every carrier to address similar vulnerabilities in their networks. Additionally, I ask industry, PSAPs, and consumer groups to work with the Bureau to explore ways to improve notifications to PSAPs and consumers when 911 outages occur.

We can't turn back time and undo this outage. But by learning the right lessons from it, we can, must, and will reduce the odds that such an outage will happen again.

I thank the Bureau staff for the expertise, speed, and tenacity they have brought to bear on this important task. I also commend AT&T for cooperating with the Bureau to help us get to the bottom of this outage.

I would like to thank Michael Caiafa, Rochelle Cohen, Michael Connelly, Lisa Fowlkes, Jeff Goldthorp, John Healy, Megan Henry, Nicole McGinnis, Jerry Stanshine, Julia Tu, and James Wiley of the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau for your tireless efforts to secure the safety of all Americans.