

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Promoting Spectrum Access for Wireless Microphone Operations*, GN Docket No. 14-166; *Amendment of Part 15 of the Commission’s Rules for Unlicensed Operations in the Television Band, Repurposed 600 MHz Band, 600 MHz Guard Bands and Duplex Gap, and Channel 37, and Amendment of Part 74 of the Commission’s Rules for Low Power Auxiliary Stations in the Repurposed 600 MHz Band and 600 MHz Duplex Gap*, ET Docket No. 14-165; *Expanding the Economic and Innovation Opportunities of Spectrum Through Incentive Auctions*, GN Docket No. 12-268.

One of the popular tropes of our time is the so-called mic drop. But what’s not so popular is a wireless mic-drop—one in which the sound cuts out during a critical moment. That’s because wireless microphones serve important purposes, such as enabling broadcasters and other video programming networks to meet the needs of consumers by covering breaking news and other live events. These microphones are also critical tools for businesses and productions across the country.

That’s why our action today clarifies and finalizes the Commission’s technical rules for wireless microphone operations. Our decision will allow this technology to continue to effectively serve America’s theaters, music venues, and live events following the incentive auction and reconfiguration of the TV bands.

Additionally, we recognize that there are certain small professional theaters, music, and performing arts or similar organizations (especially in rural areas) that have the same needs for interference protection as existing wireless microphone licensees, but that don’t meet our current license requirements. So we propose in the *Further Notice* a limited expansion of licensee eligibility based on a user’s demonstrated need for and capability of providing high-quality audio during productions, regardless of the number of mics that user typically employs.

Here’s how this would work. Imagine that a small professional theater decides to put on a production of the hit show *Hamilton*. But the performance only requires the use of 30 wireless microphones. Under our current rules, this theater couldn’t get interference protection from white space devices operating in the same bands, so the actors’ carefully crafted performance could be interrupted by a competing unlicensed device. Not only would this affect the consumer experience, but Alexander Hamilton would risk “throwing away [his] shot!” Our limited expansion would accommodate the needs of wireless mic users like this one.

I want to thank the Commission staff who worked so diligently on this item. From the Office of Engineering & Technology, thank you to Rashmi Doshi, Ira Keltz, Julie Knapp, Geraldine Matise, Paul Murray, Rodney Small, and Hugh Van Tuyl. From the Wireless Bureau, thank you to Steve Buenzow, Nese Guendelsberger, John Schauble, and Scot Stone. And finally, from the Office of General Counsel, thanks to David Horowitz and Keith McCrickard.