

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN TOM WHEELER**

Re: *Commission Policies and Procedures Under Section 310(b)(4) of the Communications Act, Foreign Investment in Broadcast Licensees, Declaratory Ruling, MB Docket No. 13-50*

Promoting a regulatory framework that does not inhibit the flow of capital to the US communications sector is an important goal of Commission policy. In today's global economy, companies regularly look beyond their borders for new sources of investment. We have heard from the broadcast industry, however, that the Commission's interpretation of Section 310(b)(4) is widely perceived as an obstacle to new investment opportunities.

Today's Declaratory Ruling clarifies that the Commission is open to considering proposals for foreign investment in broadcast licensees that exceed the 25 percent statutory benchmark.

I want to emphasize that we are "open to considering" such proposals. This is far from an indication that we're going to rubber stamp them. The Commission will look at each petition and application on a case-by-case basis to determine if approval to exceed 25 percent benchmark for foreign ownership is consistent with the public interest, including the goals established by Congress. Those goals include encouraging investment, innovation, media diversity, localism, and the efficient use of spectrum.

The infusion of additional foreign capital has the potential to enhance the ability of broadcasters to use their spectrum to serve the needs and interests of their communities. Moreover, as we all know, the Commission is engaged in an extensive process to assure that spectrum is put to its highest and best use. Among other means, this process will utilize a voluntary incentive action to allow the market to make that decision. I, therefore, will assess foreign ownership petitions and applications by looking at, among other factors, whether they will help to fulfill these goals, including efficient spectrum usage.

Today's ruling could, for example, unleash new capital to help stations to make the up-front investment necessary to share a channel after their spectrum is sold at auction. Similarly, foreign capital that would help a broadcaster move from the UHF band to VHF band might also further the Commission's efficiency goals. We are in the midst of a major effort to improve spectrum efficiency, and I encourage those who might want to attract foreign investment to keep those goals in mind.