

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Video Description: Implementation of the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010*, MB Docket No. 11-43.

One of the things that binds us is a culture that celebrates the timeless moments from our favorite television shows. Families and friends are brought together by rehashing that time Lil Sebastian visited the Pawnee Parks and Recreation office¹ or the time Dwight Schrute's stapler got jello-ed.² Workplace humor oftentimes centers around recalling Henry Winkler's blithe jump-of-the-shark not once,³ but twice,⁴ or (for old-school TV connoisseurs) the epic chocolate conveyer belt fail in *I Love Lucy*.⁵

But imagine if you couldn't really know about these shared moments of American culture. So much of comedy, drama, and suspense in television depends on visual cues—subtle moments that you need to perceive to fully appreciate the moment. If you are blind or visually impaired, you just can't perceive them.

That's where video description comes in. Video description involves a narrator describing the critical visual elements of a program. Currently, under the FCC's rules, certain networks are required to provide 50 hours of video described programming per quarter. In this *Order*, we expand the availability of video described programming on top-rated broadcast and non-broadcast networks for Americans who are blind or visually impaired. In particular, we increase the hours requirement to 87.5, which is as high as our statutory authority permits. Additionally, the new rules we adopt today provide more flexibility for networks and American viewers by permitting the additional hours of video described programming to be aired at any time between 6 a.m. and midnight.

I'd like to thank Michelle Carey, Lyle Elder, Martha Heller, Maria Mullarkey, and Mary Beth Murphy from the Media Bureau for their hard work on this *Order*. This decision will allow Americans who rely on video description to have greater access to described programming. Or, in more colloquial terms, they'll better appreciate the hilarity of Dre Johnson's explanation in *black-ish* that "no matter who you are, or where you're at, it's your duty to give the nod."⁶

¹ Everyone Loves Lil' Sebastian from *Parks and Recreation*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=np3-PVCjOOg>.

² Stapler in Jello from *The Office*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=glFrp-CmNVA>.

³ Fonzie Jumps the Shark from *Happy Days*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvGopsM1G9g>.

⁴ Henry Winkler Jumps the Shark . . . again . . . from *Arrested Development*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jm6B31HKBw>.

⁵ Lucy and Ethel wrap chocolates! from *I Love Lucy*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WmAwcMNxGqM>.

⁶ The Nod from *black-ish*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k0Zn4NCsP9Q>.