

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRWOMAN JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Unlicensed Use of the 6 GHz Band, Expanding Flexible Use in Mid-Band Spectrum Between 3.7 and 24 GHz*; ET Docket No. 18-295, GN Docket No. 17-183; Third Report and Order (December 11, 2024)

This week the Armed Services Committee in both the Senate and House of Representatives released a compromise version of the 2025 National Defense Authorization Act. It is one of the highest priority bills we will see before the end of this Congress. This legislation has something in it that is also a high priority for the Federal Communications Commission—and that’s authorizing auction authority for spectrum licenses we have on hand in order to raise revenues to fully fund the removal of insecure equipment in our communications networks. This is good news for national security. It is also good news because it will mean more licensed spectrum off our shelves and put to use connecting millions of Americans.

But powerful innovation in wireless does not only come from licensed spectrum. Unlicensed spectrum matters, too. In fact, our lives run on unlicensed spectrum. We use it for everything from connecting at work and home with Wi-Fi to supply chain management in warehouses and delivery trucks, from maximizing our workouts with fitness trackers and earbuds to making our homes smarter and more efficient.

I like to think of unlicensed spectrum as an invisible force in our economy. Wi-Fi alone will foster \$769 billion in economic growth in 2024. That number is projected to rise 21 percent in 2025 and as high as 67 percent by 2027 when the latest version of Wi-Fi will be in available in millions of devices.

This was all made possible more than three decades ago when creative engineers at this agency challenged the status quo by suggesting that spectrum that was not licensed could be put to use for all. So the FCC opened a handful of underused frequencies—airwaves that were widely viewed as “garbage bands”—to anyone who followed some basic technical rules. Unlicensed spectrum was born.

What followed was revolutionary. We made it possible to access airwaves without licenses, to innovate without permission, and to develop low-power wireless technologies that have changed the way we live and work.

The challenge now is to keep this good stuff growing. So a few years ago, when the global pandemic put our Wi-Fi routers centerstage, the FCC determined it was vital to identify additional spectrum to carry our unlicensed wireless activity and set aside a large swath of airwaves in the 6 GHz band. This was the right thing to do. Because as fiber, cable, and commercial wireless move to gigabit speeds, we need to ensure our Wi-Fi connections have the wider channels and additional bandwidth they need to keep pace.

Today we take the effort to support unlicensed activity in the 6 GHz band even further. We are opening up 350 megahertz of the 6 GHz band to small mobile devices operating at very low power. When you combine that with the 850 megahertz of the 6 GHz band that we made

available for low-power use just a year ago, we are expanding access to 1,200 megahertz to help jumpstart the next generation of unlicensed wireless devices.

This 1,200 megahertz means unlicensed bandwidth with a mix of high capacity and low latency that is absolutely prime for immersive, real-time applications. These are the airwaves where we can develop wearable technologies and expand access to augmented and virtual reality in ways that will provide new opportunities in education, healthcare, and entertainment. This is the unlicensed spectrum where the future happens—and with the 6 GHz band the United States is leading the way.

Thank you to the staff responsible for this effort, including Ira Keltz, Dana Shaffer, Krista Senell, Jamie Coleman, Jamison Prime, Michael Ha, Nicholas Oros, Bahman Badipour, Martin Doczkat, Hugh Van Tuyl, Aniqah Tahsin, Damian Ariza, Joe Prebble, David Duarte, and Siobahn Philemon from the Office of Engineering and Technology; Jeff Neumann from the Media Bureau; Patrick Sun, Aleks Yankelevich, and Pramesh Jobanputra from the Office of Economics and Analytics; Keith McCrickard, Doug Klein, Anjali Singh, and Dave Konczal from the Office of General Counsel; Dante Ibarra from the Office of International Affairs; Roger Noel, Paul Powell, Blaise Scinto, John Schauble, and Chris Andes from the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau; Whitney Lohmeyer, Sankar Persaud, Franco Hinojosa, Scott Mackoul, and Stephen Dull from the Space Bureau; and Mike Gussow and Joycelyn James from the Office of Communications Business Opportunities.