

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS**

Re: *In the Matter of Single Network Future: Supplemental Coverage from Space, Space Innovation, GN Docket No. 23-65, IB Docket No. 22-271, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (March 14, 2024)*

Just about a year has passed since we proposed a framework for launching cell towers in space. During that time, we've seen greater promise. More rescues of [hikers](#), [stranded motorists](#), and [crash victims](#) who reached emergency services with a satellite text. More testing of capabilities that go beyond texting, including the [first two-way satellite-to-cell phone calls](#), the first [5G satellite-to-cell phone call](#), and satellite-to-cell data downloads peaking at [14](#) and [17](#) Mbps. We've also seen more investment to bring those capabilities out of the lab and into the hands of consumers. Not to mention much greater international interest and focus, much of it galvanized at last year's World Radio Conference.

Where we've seen promise, we've also seen pivots. We've seen partners [end](#) work on a proprietary satellite-to-cell solution. We've seen analysts and executives shift away from the hype in favor of a more [measured debate](#) about the satellite-to-cell business plan. We've also seen companies fill-in connectivity gaps the old fashioned way—by pairing [purpose-built satellite terminals](#) with cellular devices instead of combining them into a direct-to-cell solution. Promises and pivots. Those are the hallmarks of a technology that is as exciting as it is fluid.

That's why I'm glad we're pursuing what this Order calls a "hybrid approach" to authorizing SCS. That approach creates an enduring, rules-based framework for less complicated SCS deployments. At the same time, it doesn't limit SCS to proposals that fit its mold. It commits to taking a serious, evidence-based look at any reasonable proposal that deserves our attention, whether that proposal meets the criteria set forth in our rules or charts a different course. In other words, it commits to keeping up not just with the promise, but with the pivots as well. And in doing so, it gives every innovator—large and small, old and new—a path to see their promise reached. This was an important aspect of the framework to me, and I'm thankful that we tweaked the item to put all SCS players on firm footing.

I thank the Chairwoman for her leadership on this item and for forging new ground so quickly in an area as novel as SCS. I'd also like to thank everyone on our staff who worked on this challenging item. It's terrific work, and it has my full support.