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Remarks On 5G Deployment in the United States

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[AUTHENTICITY CERTIFIED: Text version below transcribed directly from audio]

Well, thank you, Mr. President, for your compelling vision of U.S. leadership on 5G. I also want to thank Larry Kudlow, the Director of the National Economic Council, for your steadfast support of this vision.

Mr. President, as you observed, America must win the race to 5G, the next generation of wireless connectivity. And this matters for two key reasons.

The first is national competitiveness. We want the good-paying jobs that develop and deploy 5G technologies -- jobs that support some of the folks in this room -- to be created here, in America. We want these technologies to give our economy a leg up as we compete against the rest of the world.

The second reason U.S. leadership matters is that 5G will improve Americans' lives in so many ways, from precision agriculture, to smart transportation networks, to telemedicine, and more. We want Americans to be the first to benefit from this new digital revolution while protecting our innovators and our citizens. And as you pointed out, Mr. President, we don't want rural Americans to be left behind.

And Mr. President, that's why I am pleased to report that America is now well positioned to win the race to fast, secure, and reliable 5G. And don't just take my word for it. In February, ABI Research stated, and I quote, "It is the United States who will win the 5G race in the short term."[1] That same month, Cisco projected that, in three years, 5G would be more than twice as prevalent in North America as in Asia.[2]

Last week, CTIA reported that America leads the world with the most commercial 5G deployments of any nation.

And just this past Tuesday, it was reported that 5G-related job listings here in the United States increased 12 percent in just the past three weeks according to data from an online job search service.[3]

Today, 5G is a success story -- an American success story. Well, how are we getting the job done? As the lead agency on 5G, the FCC is pursuing a three-part strategy called the 5G FAST Plan.[4] First, we're freeing up spectrum, the invisible airwaves that carry wireless traffic. We finished our first 5G spectrum auction [for 28 GHz] in January, and we're holding a second, right now [for 24 GHz], that has already generated almost 2 billion dollars in bids.

Second, we're making it easier to install wireless infrastructure. 5G will rely heavily on a web of small antennas. But when I came into office, regulations designed for tall towers threatened to strangle our 5G future in red tape. We have eliminated these rules, because infrastructure the size of a pizza box shouldn't have to jump through the same regulatory hoops as a 200-foot cell tower.[5]

And third, we've taken action to encourage the deployment of optical fiber. That is because 5G isn't just about wireless. We'll also need strong fiber networks to carry 5G traffic once it goes from the air to the ground. And we've done a lot to make that happen, including ending heavy-handed regulations imposed by the prior Administration.

And here, too, we are getting results. Last year, fiber was deployed to more new locations in the United States than in any year before. But in the race to 5G, our early success is still early. We still need to do more, and we will.

And so today I'm announcing two new steps the FCC will take to build on our momentum. First, the FCC intends to start its third 5G spectrum auction on December 10th of this year [for 37 GHz, 39 GHz, and 47 GHz]. This will be the largest spectrum auction in American history. We will be selling 3,400 megahertz in three different bands. And for those of you who aren't wireless experts, that is a lot of spectrum.

Second, to help build the infrastructure of the future, the FCC aims to create a 20.4 billion dollar Rural Digital Opportunity Fund headed by the agency [FCC]. This money will extend high-speed broadband to up to 4 million homes and small businesses in rural America. These next-generation networks will bring greater economic opportunity to America's heartland, including some of the great jobs building infrastructure, and they will help support future 5G technologies.

In closing, I want to thank you again, Mr. President, for your leadership on 5G. Your White House has advanced your vision in many ways, from international treaty negotiations to much-needed regulatory reforms. I appreciate all these efforts, and in the same spirit, this FCC will help build a great and lasting legacy of American success on 5G.

Thank you, Mr. President.

[1] Feb 6 2019. *The U.S. Secures 5G Superiority, at Least in Short-Term American efforts to put the country first pay off in the 5G era*. Online at: https://www.abiresearch.com/press/us-secures-5g-superiority-least-short-term/

[2] Original data from the Cisco Visual Networking Index: Global Mobile Data Traffic Forecast Update, 2017–2022 White Paper. Online at: https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/solutions/collateral/service-provider/visual-networking-index-vni/white-paper-c11-738429.html. Also from the same report: "Asia Pacific will account for 56% of global mobile traffic by 2022, the largest share of traffic by any region by a substantial margin....North America, once the region with the largest traffic share, will have only the fourth-largest share by 2022, having been surpassed by Central and Eastern Europe and Middle East and Africa."

[3] As reported by Bloomberg, the online job search company referenced is LinkUp.

[4] FCC 5G Fast Plan.pdf [Source: FCC.gov]

[5] Mixed metaphor alert relating a technology's physical size (a pizza box) with its regulatory import (jumping through hoops) to form an argument by analogy of questionable rhetorical force. The analogy -- like all such analogies -- is susceptible to the rhetorical tactic of counter example -- here by offering a) case instances demonstrating a non-necessary or non-probable relationship between a given technology's size and its regulatory import or (worse) b) case instances suggesting that smaller technologies warrant exceptional regulatory consideration.