

**STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER ANNA M. GOMEZ
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

**BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
UNITED STATES SENATE**

“OVERSIGHT OF THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION”

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Chairman Cruz, Ranking Member Cantwell, and distinguished Members of the Senate Commerce Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

When I was confirmed as an FCC Commissioner just over two years ago, I could not have anticipated the pace or the magnitude of the challenges we now face.

As Commissioner, my priorities have centered on expanding reliable and affordable high-speed connectivity to every community; maintaining U.S. leadership in wireless innovation through smart spectrum policy; preserving localism and a vibrant media ecosystem; and ensuring first responders have the tools they need to reach the public when it matters most.

These priorities reflect long-standing, bipartisan goals that should unite this Committee and the Commission alike. They are the kinds of issues the FCC has traditionally addressed with seriousness and a shared commitment to serving consumers. And they are the areas where I had hoped we would be spending our time and energy.

Instead, over the past ten months, the Commission has taken a markedly different approach, one that has undermined its reputation as a stable, independent, and expert-driven regulatory body.

Nowhere is that departure more concerning than in its actions to intimidate government critics, pressure media companies, and challenge the boundaries of the First Amendment.

It is precisely because of these concerns that I launched a First Amendment Tour earlier this year, traveling across the country to hear directly from communities in Mississippi, Kentucky, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Washington State, New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, and California. My goal was simple: to listen, to engage, and to reaffirm that the FCC’s work must remain grounded in constitutional principles and public trust.

And, I have found myself aligned with voices across the ideological spectrum, united by a shared belief that the First Amendment is fundamental to our democracy and worth defending, even when doing so is politically inconvenient. In that spirit, I want to thank Chairman Cruz for speaking out in defense of the First Amendment and for his continued engagement on this critical issue.

One thing I learned during these conversations is that when the FCC loses its focus and strays from its core mission, consumers pay the price. That reality results in higher costs, fewer choices, and missed opportunities to expand access across the communications ecosystem.

One clear example of where Congress and the Commission has been aligned is spectrum policy. For years, the FCC was hamstrung by the lack of auction authority, limiting our ability to innovate and bring new spectrum to market. I want to thank Congress for restoring our spectrum auction authority. This is an important step toward expanding capacity, promoting competition, and maintaining U.S. leadership in wireless innovation. When spectrum policy is done properly, it lowers costs for consumers and fuels economic growth. Over the next few months, continued bipartisan engagement on this issue will be critical to getting it right.

Yet spectrum is only part of the story. At the same time, millions of households have faced rising broadband costs following the lapse of the Affordable Connectivity Program, with little action from the Commission focused on affordability or consumer relief. Taken together, these missed opportunities reflect a troubling lack of focus on the everyday challenges consumers face in accessing and affording essential communications services.

Beyond missed opportunities, this FCC has taken affirmative actions that have raised costs and reduced choice for consumers. In the wireless market, FCC actions contributed to the loss of a potential fourth national wireless competitor, weakening competition and increasing the risk of higher prices. At the same time, the Commission reversed the work it had previously done under congressional mandate to lower the cost of prison communications and chose to increase the cost of phone and video calls, leaving some of the most vulnerable families paying excessive rates to stay connected with loved ones.

These concerns are especially acute in the media landscape. The FCC has advanced plans that would allow billion-dollar media companies to grow even larger, likely at the expense of local news and community-driven reporting. This push comes at a time when major media companies are already consolidating across broadcasting, streaming, and content production, raising serious questions about market power, editorial independence, and the future of community-based journalism.

The national television ownership cap is established by law and reflects Congress's judgment about the importance of competition, localism, and viewpoint diversity. Efforts by this FCC to reinterpret or effectively sidestep that statutory limit present significant issues concerning the scope of the FCC's authority and the consequences for those it regulates and serves. Whether in broadcasting or streaming, media consolidation should not erode the independence of the press or diminish the voices of local communities. Taken together, these actions underscore the need for the FCC to refocus on the principles that matter in the real world and the impacts its decisions have beyond Washington.

I have always believed that the FCC does its best work when it honors the needs of the people it serves. When the agency focuses on lowering costs, expanding opportunity, and protecting the ability of communities to communicate and be heard, it builds public trust and produces real benefits for consumers. I look forward to working with this Committee to ensure the FCC returns to that mission and continues to serve the American people with integrity and independence.

Thank you again for the opportunity to join you today. I look forward to your questions.