

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER ROBERT M. McDOWELL**

Re: High-Cost Universal Service Support, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, WC Docket No. 05-337, CC Docket No. 96-45.

I felt it critical when the Commission adopted the cap on competitive eligible telecommunications carrier (CETC) support in May 2008, to include an exception for all of the providers serving tribal lands across the country, and Alaska Native lands – some of the most under-served parts of America. This limited exception was designed to ensure that companies operating in these remote areas will continue to receive high-cost support to provide their services while we move toward a permanent reform of the Universal Service system.

My colleagues and I pledged last year to resolve questions regarding the implementation of this exception. I am pleased that with this order we have fulfilled our commitment. I look forward to working with my colleagues to resolve other questions and, more importantly, to continuing our work towards fundamental reform of the intercarrier compensation and Universal Service systems.