

SEPARATE STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER KEVIN J. MARTIN

Re: Amendment of Part 15 Regarding New Requirements and Measurement Guidelines for Access Broadband Over Power Line Systems; Carrier Current Systems, including Broadband over Power Line Systems, Report and Order, ET Docket Nos. 04-36 & 03-104

I am pleased to support this item, which adopts new rules for Broadband over Power Line (BPL) systems. BPL systems use existing electric power lines to provide high-speed communications. Because power lines are ubiquitous – reaching virtually every community and every home – BPL systems have the potential to become a last-mile solution throughout the United States. As such, they would not only provide competition to cable broadband and DSL, they could bring Internet access and high-speed broadband to rural and isolated areas. BPL systems also serve an important homeland security function, providing a redundant data network. For these reasons, the President has explicitly encouraged the introduction of BPL technology.¹

I have seen a BPL system first hand, and I came away very impressed. Using BPL, I was able to watch a DVD-quality movie, play a video game on the Internet, and print pages from a news web site – all simultaneously. I was impressed not only with the fast transmission speed, but also with the ease with which the home could be networked. Simply plugging a device into an electrical outlet enabled it to communicate with devices plugged into outlets in other rooms, as well as connect to the Internet. There is no question that this technology has terrific potential.

In this Order, we have attempted to facilitate deployment of BPL while ensuring that existing users are protected from harmful interference. Working closely with NTIA, we have taken strides to address interference concerns of both Government and private users. Nevertheless, I recognize that Amateur radio operators still have concerns that they will experience interference from BPL systems. In addition, broadcasters are concerned that BPL systems will cause interference in the low VHF band. I take these concerns – as well as the other concerns expressed about BPL systems causing interference – very seriously. I am confident that the Commission will continue to monitor these concerns and will take steps, where needed, to address interference problems going forward.

¹ See President George W. Bush, *Remarks on Innovation at the U.S. Department of Commerce*, Washington, D.C. (June 24, 2004); *Remarks at the American Association of Community Colleges Annual Convention*, Minneapolis Convention Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota (April 26, 2004).