SEPARATE STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN MICHAEL K. POWELL

Re: Inquiry Regarding Carrier Current Systems, including Broadband over Power Line Systems; ET Docket No. 03-XXX

Broadband over Power Line has the potential to provide consumers with a ubiquitous third broadband pipe to the home. The development of multiple broadband-capable platforms – be it power lines, Wi-Fi, satellite, laser or licensed wireless – will transform the competitive broadband landscape and reap dramatic windfalls for American consumers and the economy. Broadband over power lines is at the cutting edge of this dramatic digital migration that will continue to free applications (*e.g.,* voice, data, and video) from the regulatory and technological shackles that have tied them to specific platforms (*e.g.,* voice to copper and video to coaxial cable). While this migration is well under way, our policies must be dynamic and flexible to further – rather than frustrate – the transition.

Facilitating the development of new facilities-based platforms must be among our core goals. The current wireless industry illustrates the tremendous power of multiple facilities-based providers to foster innovation, promote ubiquity, increase competition and drive down prices. Wireless achieved these successes because the FCC employed a relatively light regulatory hand and licensed multiple providers in each market who built their own facilities to deliver value to consumers. Power lines and other new platforms can deliver the same value in the broadband market.

As I recently witnessed first hand at a local site visit, the potential of this new technology is immense. Broadband over power lines can offer consumers freedom to access broadband services from any room in their home without need to pay for additional wiring, by simply plugging an adaptor into an existing electrical outlet. For our nation's power utilities, Broadband over power lines can improve the utilities' ability to manage their electric grids through applications like remote power outage notification, load management to reduce peak power usage, load balancing, and remote meter reading. Power line technology also provides for useful redundancy and diversity in communications networks that are key aspects of secure homeland communications.

Power line networks are being tested today in a dozen states around the country and are a testament to the incredible innovations taking place in broadband network technologies. Today's notice explores ways to update our rules to ensure that regulatory uncertainty does not in any way hinder the deployment of these new services. Ultimately it will be for the marketplace to decide how broadband over power lines fits into tomorrow's competitive telecommunications landscape, but we welcome them to the frontier of the digital migration.