

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)
)
Rural Call Completion) WC Docket No. 13-39

ORDER

Extended Reply Comment Date: June 11, 2013

Adopted: May 22, 2013

Released: May 22, 2013

By the Chief, Competition Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau:

1. In this Order, the Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) extends the deadline for filing reply comments in the Rural Call Completion rulemaking by two weeks, from Tuesday, May 28 until Tuesday, June 11. The Bureau grants this extension in response to a request filed by the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA).¹ A two-week extension will ensure that parties have sufficient time to consider and respond to the initial comments without unduly delaying the proceeding.

2. In February of this year, the Commission launched a rulemaking to address rural call completion issues.² On April 18, the Bureau released a public notice announcing comment deadlines in the rulemaking.³ Initial comments were due by Tuesday, May 13, and replies by Tuesday, May 28.⁴

3. On May 16, NASUCA filed a Motion for Extension of Time to File Reply Comments, requesting that the Commission extend the deadline for the filing of reply comments in this proceeding by 30 days.⁵ NASUCA notes that the Commission seeks “detailed information concerning the workings of” an “increasingly complex and diverse telecommunications network” and asserts that “[a]dditional time is needed to review and study the initial comments and potentially to formulate thoughtful reply comments.”⁶ NASUCA also notes that, as a membership organization, it requires time to “circulate proposed comments among the membership and to secure consensus and approval.”⁷ On May 20, the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc., NTCA – the Rural Broadband Association, the Western Telecommunications Alliance, and the Eastern Rural Telecom Association (collectively, the Rural

¹ National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates Motion for Extension of Time to File Reply Comments, WC Docket No. 13-39 (filed May 16, 2013) (NASUCA Motion).

² *Rural Call Completion*, WC Docket No. 13-39, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 28 FCC Rcd 1569 (2013).

³ *Wireline Competition Bureau Announces Deadlines for Comments on Rural Call Completion Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Invites Comment on List of Rural Operating Carrier Numbers*, WC Docket No. 13-39, Public Notice, DA 13-780 (rel. Apr. 18, 2013).

⁴ *Id.* at 1.

⁵ NASUCA Motion at 2.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

Associations) filed an opposition to the NASUCA Motion.⁸ The Rural Associations acknowledge “the difficulties of addressing complex issues raised in comments and in reaching consensus among constituent members,” but they argue that “solutions to the rural call completion problem have already been delayed too long” and that “[t]he Commission should not add additional delay at this point.”⁹ The Rural Associations state that if the Commission does decide to grant NASUCA’s request, the Commission “should redouble its efforts to consider the record in this proceeding in a speedy way.”¹⁰

4. The Commission’s policy, as set forth in section 1.46(a) of the Commission’s rules, is that extensions of time are not routinely granted.¹¹ However, given our desire to encourage thoughtful consideration of the important issues raised in this proceeding, we find that a partial grant of the NASUCA Motion will facilitate that consideration without undue delay of the proceeding. While an extension is warranted here, we find that the request for an additional 30 days in which to file reply comments is unnecessarily long. Instead, we grant a 14-day extension of the current reply comment deadline, which will establish June 11, 2013 as the new deadline.

5. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED, pursuant to section 4(i) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. § 154(i), and sections 0.91, 0.291, and 1.46 of the Commission’s rules, 47 C.F.R. §§ 0.91, 0.291, and 1.46, that the Motion for Extension of Time to File Reply Comments filed by the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates IS GRANTED to the extent described herein, and that the deadline to file reply comments in this proceeding is extended to June 11, 2013.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

William A. Dever
Chief, Competition Policy Division
Wireline Competition Bureau

⁸ Opposition of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc., NTCA – the Rural Broadband Association, the Western Telecommunications Alliance, and the Eastern Rural Telecom Association, WC Docket No. 13-39 (filed May 20, 2013).

⁹ *Id.* at 2.

¹⁰ *Id.* at 2-3.

¹¹ 47 C.F.R. § 1.46.