

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

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

REPORT AND REQUEST FOR COMMENT

Adopted: September 14, 2020

Released: September 14, 2020

Comments Due: October 29, 2020

By the Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau:

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Every American should have confidence that they can make or receive a phone call from anywhere in the country, regardless of their geographic location. Yet, historically, a number of factors combined to impede delivery of calls to rural or remote parts of the United States and make those calls more likely to fail.¹ As the Commission has repeatedly recognized, these failures have significant personal and economic costs² and threaten public safety in rural communities.³ For these reasons, the Commission has long been committed to addressing this issue, and imposed a series of rules designed to ensure that calls are completed to all Americans, especially those in rural America.⁴ These rules include specific requirements for a covered provider⁵ to monitor the performance of intermediate providers⁶ following the handoff of a call, list a point of contact on its website designated for resolving call

¹ See *Rural Call Completion*, WC Docket No. 13-39, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 28 FCC Rcd 16154, 16162-64, paras. 16-18 (2013) (*First Rural Call Completion Order*); *Rural Call Completion*, WC Docket No. 13-39, Second Report and Order and Third Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 33 FCC Rcd 4199, 4200-01, paras. 3-4 (2017) (*Second Rural Call Completion Order*).

² See e.g., *Rural Call Completion*, WC Docket No. 13-39, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 28 FCC Rcd 1569, 1570-71, para. 4 (2013).

³ See e.g., *First Rural Call Completion Order*, 28 FCC Rcd at 16161, para. 14.

⁴ See *First Rural Call Completion Order*, 28 FCC Rcd at 16154; *Second Rural Call Completion Order*, 33 FCC Rcd at 4199; *Rural Call Completion*, WC Docket No. 13-39, Third Report and Order and Order, 33 FCC Rcd 8400 (2018) (*Third Rural Call Completion Order*); *Rural Call Completion*, WC Docket No. 13-39, Fourth Report and Order, 34 FCC Rcd 1781 (2018) (*Fourth Rural Call Completion Order*).

⁵ The Commission's rural call completion rules define a "covered provider" as "a provider of long-distance voice service that makes the initial long-distance call path choice for more than 100,000 domestic retail subscriber lines," including all of the "business and residential fixed subscriber lines and mobile phones" aggregated over all of the provider's affiliates. 47 CFR § 64.2101.

⁶ For the purposes of our rural call completion rules, the term "intermediate provider" means any entity that "(1) [e]nters into a business arrangement with a covered provider or other intermediate provider for the specific purpose of carrying, routing, or transmitting voice traffic that is generated from the placement of a call placed— (i) [f]rom an end user connection using a North American Numbering Plan resource; or (ii) [t]o an end user connection using such a numbering resource; and (2) [d]oes not itself, either directly or in conjunction with an affiliate, serve as a covered provider in the context of originating or terminating a given call." 47 CFR § 64.2101.

completion issues, and establish service quality standards for intermediate providers to ensure the reliable completion of calls to rural areas. With each new action, the Commission also considered the effectiveness of its existing rules, leading to the elimination of a burdensome requirement that covered providers submit quarterly reports of aggregated call data to the Commission.⁷

2. As part of the ongoing effort to address problems with rural call completion, the Commission directed the Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) to report and seek comment on the effectiveness of several of the rural call completion rules adopted by the Commission. Specifically, in the *Second Rural Call Completion Order*, the Commission charged the Bureau to work with the Enforcement and Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureaus to review the effectiveness of the rules the Commission adopted in that Order, namely the rules related to monitoring of intermediate providers, designating a point of contact, and the removal of the data reporting requirement for covered providers, and publish a report with the Bureau's findings to be made available for public comment.⁸ Subsequently, in the *Fourth Rural Call Completion Order*, the Commission directed the Bureau to seek comment on the effectiveness of the intermediate provider service quality standards that the Commission adopted in that Order.⁹

3. In this Report, the Bureau finds that the rules the Commission adopted in the *Second Rural Call Completion Order* have been effective in improving rural call completion and we seek comment on that conclusion. We also seek comment on the effectiveness of the intermediate provider service quality standards adopted in the *Fourth Rural Call Completion Order*.

II. BACKGROUND

4. In the *First Rural Call Completion Order*, the Commission adopted rules intended to address reports of long-distance calls failing to reach rural customers.¹⁰ The rules imposed data recording, retention, and reporting obligations on providers of long-distance voice service making the initial long-distance call path choice for more than 100,000 domestic retail subscriber lines.¹¹ These entities, known as "covered providers," included local exchange carriers (LECs), interexchange carriers (IXCs), commercial mobile radio service (CMRS) providers, and VoIP service providers.¹² The recording, retention, and reporting rules were intended to increase the Commission's ability to monitor

⁷ See *Second Rural Call Completion Order*, 33 FCC Rcd at 4224, para. 58 (noting that covered providers were required to "submit to the Commission in a certified report once per calendar quarter the following information, for each rural [Operating Company Number] OCN, and for non-rural [Operating Company Numbers] OCNs in the aggregate, separated by interstate and intrastate call attempts: (1) the total number of call attempts; (2) the total number of answered calls; and (3) the number of call attempts that were not answered, reported separately for call attempts signaled as 'busy,' 'ring no answer,' or 'unassigned number'").

⁸ See *id.* at 4222-23, para. 51. The Commission directed the Bureau to issue this report within two years of the effective date of the rules, which is October 17, 2020. See *id.*

⁹ See *Fourth Rural Call Completion Order*, 34 FCC Rcd at 1785-86, para. 13. The Commission directed the Bureau to seek comment one year from the effective date of the relevant rules, which is September 15, 2020. See *id.*

¹⁰ *First Rural Call Completion Order*, 28 FCC Rcd at 16155, para. 1.

¹¹ *Id.* at 16164, para. 19. The specific data covered providers were required to record and retain were: (i) the calling party number; (ii) called party number; (iii) date; (iv) time of day; (v) whether the call is handed off to an intermediate provider and, if so, which intermediate provider; (vi) whether the call is going to a rural carrier and, if so, which rural carrier, as identified by its Operating Company Number; (vii) whether the call is interstate; (viii) whether the call attempt was answered; and (ix) whether the call attempt was completed to the incumbent local exchange carrier but signaled as busy, ring no answer, or unassigned number. *Id.* at 16174-76, paras. 40-43. The Commission also adopted six-month retention period and quarterly reporting requirements. *Id.* at 16183, para. 62.

¹² *First Rural Call Completion Order*, 28 FCC Rcd at 16164, para. 19.

and redress rural call completion issues.¹³

5. As part of the *First Rural Call Completion Order*, the Commission directed the Bureau to publish for comment a report analyzing the subsequent two years of data collections, evaluating the effectiveness the reporting rules.¹⁴ This Report, released in 2017, found that the aggregate call answer rate in rural areas was approximately 2% lower than in nonrural areas, but there had been no improvement in call answer rates over the course of the two year reporting period.¹⁵ Significantly, the Bureau also identified a number of data quality issues, such as inconsistencies in how and what data was reported, which prevented the Bureau from drawing firm conclusions from the reported data.¹⁶ As a result, the Bureau recommended that the Commission seek comment on eliminating the data recording, retention, and reporting rules, and replacing them with new requirements that could better address rural call completion issues.¹⁷

6. In 2018, the Commission adopted the *Second Rural Call Completion Order*, which refocused the Commission's rules to better address rural call completion problems while also reducing unnecessary burdens on covered providers.¹⁸ With the aim of assigning clear responsibility to covered providers to ensure that calls to rural areas are completed, the Commission imposed a two-part monitoring requirement on covered providers.¹⁹ Under this rule, for each intermediate provider with which it contracts, a covered provider must (1) monitor the intermediate provider's performance in the completion of call attempts to rural telephone companies from the subscriber lines for which the covered provider makes the initial long-distance call path choice;²⁰ and (2) based on the results of this monitoring, take steps that are reasonably calculated to address any identified performance issues.²¹

7. The *Second Rural Call Completion Order* also eliminated the data reporting requirement adopted in the *First Rural Call Completion Order*,²² finding that the requirement was burdensome on covered providers and the reported data was of limited utility to the Commission.²³ Furthermore, the Commission concluded that the burdens associated with modifying or replacing this reporting requirement would outweigh any benefits to be gleaned from a revised data collection.²⁴ The

¹³ See *id.* at 16164, para. 19. The Commission also codified the long-standing industry prohibition of false ring signaling—the practice of an originating or intermediate provider prematurely sending audible ring tones to the caller before the call setup request has reached the terminating rural provider. *Id.* at 16200-03, paras. 111-115.

¹⁴ See *id.* at 16198, para. 105.

¹⁵ See *Rural Call Completion*, WC Docket No. 13-39, Report, 32 FCC Rcd 4980, 4981, para. 2 (WCB 2017) (*2017 Rural Call Completion Report*).

¹⁶ See *2017 Rural Call Completion Report*, 32 FCC Rcd at 4981, para. 2. The two main problems the Bureau found affecting the data collection was the inconsistency in how covered providers categorized their call attempts as “answered,” “busy,” “ring no answer,” and “unassigned number,” and the inclusion in the reporting of autodialer traffic, intermediate provider traffic, and wholesale traffic. *Id.* at 4989-95, paras. 23-37.

¹⁷ *Id.* at 4995, para. 38.

¹⁸ See *Second Rural Call Completion Order*, 33 FCC Rcd at 4204, para. 11.

¹⁹ See *id.* at 4204, para. 12, 4205, para. 15.

²⁰ *Id.* at 4205, para. 15. The Commission further clarified that to comply with this monitoring requirement, a covered provider must prospectively evaluate the performance of intermediate providers and retrospectively investigate any problems that arise. See *id.* at 4206-11, paras. 17-25.

²¹ *Id.* at 4205, para. 15, 4211-12, paras. 26-29.

²² See *id.* at 4224, para. 57.

²³ *Second Rural Call Completion Order*, 33 FCC Rcd at 4225-26, para. 61.

²⁴ *Id.* at 4226, para. 62.

Commission left in place the recording and retention rules, but sought comment in an attached Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on whether to eliminate those requirements as well.²⁵

8. Finally, the *Second Rural Call Completion Order* adopted the covered provider point of contact rule. This rule requires covered providers to make publicly available contact information, including a telephone number and email address, for the express purpose of receipt and handling of rural call completion issues.²⁶ Covered providers are required under the rule to include this information on their websites and the information must be “easy to find and use.”²⁷ This information must be kept current, and covered providers must ensure that staff promptly respond to and address rural call completion issues, usually within a single business day.²⁸

9. In the *Third Rural Call Completion Order*, the Commission adopted several rules to begin its implementation of the Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act of 2017 (RCC Act).²⁹ The Commission established an intermediate provider registry,³⁰ which required a broad category of intermediate providers to register with the Commission before offering service,³¹ and adopted rules prohibiting covered providers from using unregistered intermediate providers.³² Covered providers must also “know, or be capable of knowing,” the identities of any intermediate providers relied on in the call path, and must disclose this information to the Commission upon request.³³

10. In 2019, the Commission completed its implementation of the RCC Act with the *Fourth Rural Call Completion Order*, adopting three service quality standards for intermediate providers. The service quality standards: (i) imposed a general duty on intermediate providers to complete calls;³⁴ (ii) required intermediate providers routing traffic to rural areas to actively monitor the performance of any downstream intermediate provider for which they have a contract, and based on this monitoring, take steps to address any issues;³⁵ and (iii) required intermediate providers to ensure that any additional intermediate providers to which they hand off a call are registered with the Commission.³⁶ These standards, similar to the covered provider monitoring requirement the Commission adopted in *Second Rural Call Completion Order*, assign responsibility to intermediate providers for their role in completing calls to rural America.³⁷ The Commission also adopted procedures to enforce these intermediate provider

²⁵ See *id.* at 4226-27, para. 64.

²⁶ See *id.* at 4204, para. 12.

²⁷ See *id.* at 4217, para. 37.

²⁸ See *id.* at 4217-18, para. 38.

²⁹ See *Third Rural Call Completion Order*, 33 FCC Rcd at 8400, para. 2.

³⁰ *Id.* at 8402, para. 6.

³¹ See *id.* at 8407-08, paras. 17-18.

³² See *id.* at 8410-14, paras. 25-36. The Commission found that this requirement is met by covered providers ensuring that any intermediate provider they directly contract with is registered and by implementing contractual restrictions that are reasonably calculated to ensure that intermediate providers throughout the call path are also registered. See *id.* at 8411-12, para. 29.

³³ *Id.* at 8414, para. 37.

³⁴ See *Fourth Rural Call Completion Order*, 34 FCC Rcd at 1789-90, paras. 20-23.

³⁵ See *id.* at 1790-91, paras. 24-26.

³⁶ See *id.* at 1791-92, paras. 27-29.

³⁷ See *id.* at 1785, para. 12. The Commission further adopted an exception to the service quality standards, as directed by the RCC Act, for intermediate providers that qualify for the covered provider safe harbor under section 64.2109 of our rules. *Id.* at 1794-94, paras. 34-36.

quality standards³⁸ and determined it was appropriate to sunset the rural call completion data recording and retention requirements established in the *First Rural Call Completion Order*.³⁹ In addition, with the adoption of the *Access Arbitrage Order* to further reduce arbitrage in the Intercarrier Compensation system, the Commission eliminated incentives that have contributed to rural call completion issues.⁴⁰ The Commission's Enforcement Bureau has also taken numerous steps to combat rural call completion problems, including conducting investigations and enforcement actions which resulted in consent decrees with providers requiring them to take steps to improve their call completion practices.⁴¹

III. DISCUSSION

11. Consistent with the Commission's instructions to the Bureau, this report finds that the rules adopted in the *Second Rural Call Completion Order*, including the covered provider monitoring and point of contact requirements, and the elimination of the data reporting requirement, have been effective in contributing to a reduction in rural call completion issues. We seek comment on this conclusion.

12. Our finding is supported by the recent experiences of providers, as well as complaint data collected by the Commission from consumers and carriers. As noted in *ex parte* filings from AT&T,⁴² NCTA,⁴³ and Verizon,⁴⁴ the overall number of complaints related to rural call completion issues that these providers receive each year, or in the case of NCTA, its member companies, continue to decline year after year.⁴⁵ These entities, which when combined, account for a substantial amount of the nation's call traffic, report that complaints are minimal and actual rural call completion issues are very rare.⁴⁶ NCTA affirms the Bureau's conclusion regarding the effectiveness of the Commission's rules, specifying that "the steps [NCTA's] member companies have taken to comply with the monitoring rules have reduced the number of completion issues that have arisen on their calls to rural areas."⁴⁷ NCTA notes that the removal of the Form 480 reporting requirement "did not diminish the level of attention [their members] give to rural call

³⁸ See *id.* at 1795-96, paras. 37-40.

³⁹ *Fourth Rural Call Completion Order*, 34 FCC Rcd at 1797-99, paras. 41-49.

⁴⁰ The record in that proceeding revealed that "incentives associated with access stimulation [led] to artificially high levels of demand, often in rural areas where such levels of demand are anomalous and largely unaccounted-for by existing network capabilities" which led to rural call completion issues. *Updating the Intercarrier Compensation Regime to Eliminate Access Arbitrage*, WC Docket No. 18-155, Report and Order and Modification of Section 214 Authorizations, 34 FCC Rcd 9035, 9074, para. 95 (2019).

⁴¹ See, e.g., *T-Mobile USA, Inc.*, Order and Consent Decree, 33 FCC Rcd 3737 (EB 2018); *inContact, Inc.*, Order and Consent Decree, 31 FCC Rcd 4329 (EB 2016).

⁴² Letter from Matthew Nodine, Assistant Vice President, Federal Regulatory, AT&T, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, WC Docket No. 13-39, at 1 (filed May 27, 2020) (*AT&T Ex Parte*).

⁴³ Letter from Jennifer McKee, Vice President & Associate General Counsel, NCTA, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, WC Docket No. 13-39, at 2 (filed June 3, 2020) (*NCTA Ex Parte*).

⁴⁴ Letter from Michele G. Cober, Counsel, Federal Regulatory and Legal Affairs, Verizon, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, WC Docket No. 13-39, at 2 (filed June 16, 2020) (*Verizon Ex Parte*).

⁴⁵ See *AT&T Ex Parte* at 1-2; *NCTA Ex Parte* at 2; *Verizon Ex Parte* at 2.

⁴⁶ AT&T writes that of the small number of rural call completion complaints it receives a significant number result from "problems with the terminating end of the call (past the point of interconnection with AT&T) or at the customer premises." *AT&T Ex Parte* at 2. NCTA notes their member companies report a very low level of complaints, and specifically, "[o]ne member company reports that the number of rural call completion complaints that it received from the Commission decreased by 36 percent between 2018 and 2019, and the provider has received no complaints in 2020." *NCTA Ex Parte* at 2. Similarly, Verizon provides that it has seen a "continuous decline in the number of rural call completion reports since 2015" and of the complaints Verizon has received since 2018, "none presented an actual rural call completion issue." *Verizon Ex Parte* at 2.

⁴⁷ *NCTA Ex Parte* at 1.

completion performance.”⁴⁸ Additionally, NCTA provides a number of examples of the steps its member companies take to comply with the covered provider monitoring requirement, including: (i) amending contractual agreements with intermediate providers to include performance requirements⁴⁹; (ii) holding regular meetings with their intermediate provider partners⁵⁰; (iii) collecting their own forms of performance data to inform their investigations and corrective actions⁵¹; (iv) developing relationships directly with rural carriers⁵²; and (v) when an issue is discovered, working with each intermediate provider directly to resolve it.⁵³ AT&T confirms the Commission’s conclusion from the *Second Rural Call Completion Order* that the costs of the reporting requirement outweighed any benefits, and provided that in AT&T’s experience, “monitoring, investigation, and best practices work together to achieve the Commission’s goals without the inefficiency and burden of an ineffective reporting regime.”⁵⁴ Verizon observes that with a “rigorous rural call completion monitoring program in place before the *Second Report and Order*, [it] has observed a decline in the number of rural call completion complaints both before and following adoption of the new rules.”⁵⁵

13. These conclusions are consistent with sharp downward trends reflected in consumer and carrier complaints collected by the Commission.⁵⁶ Both of these data sets show a marked decrease in the number of complaints filed regarding rural call completion issues after the *Second Rural Call Completion Order*’s covered provider monitoring requirements came into effect on October 17, 2018. For example, the Commission received approximately 130 consumer complaints classified as relating to rural call completion in 2018, approximately 115 of which predated the effectiveness of our covered provider monitoring rules.⁵⁷ In 2019, the Commission received approximately 55 of such complaints—a more than 50% decrease from 2018. In the first half of 2020, the Commission received approximately 30 consumer complaints classified as relating to rural call completion. This trend is also mirrored in the carrier complaint data, which show 147 rural call completion carrier complaints filed in 2018, 129 of which predated the effective date of the rules. The following year, in 2019, the Commission received only 35 such carrier complaints, a decrease of more than 75% from 2018. In the first half of 2020, the Commission received only 9 such complaints. We acknowledge that the complaint data may not be completely representative of the state of rural call completion issues nationwide, and that the time that has elapsed since the rules took effect is limited.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, when the downward trends in the Commission’s complaint data following the effective date of the rural call completion rules adopted by the Commission in the *Second Rural Call Completion Order* are considered in tandem with the record evidence submitted by AT&T, NCTA, and Verizon through their *ex parte* presentations, the available

⁴⁸ *Id.* at 1-2.

⁴⁹ *Id.* at 2.

⁵⁰ *Id.* at 2.

⁵¹ *See id.* at 2.

⁵² *See id.* at 2.

⁵³ NCTA *Ex Parte* at 2.

⁵⁴ AT&T *Ex Parte* at 2.

⁵⁵ Verizon *Ex Parte* at 2.

⁵⁶ The Commission has previously referenced trends in these data sets in the *Second Rural Call Completion Order* and in reports to Congress. *See Second Rural Call Completion Order*, 33 FCC Rcd at 4203, para. 9; Report on Efforts to Resolve Call Completion Issues and Prevent Discriminatory Delivery of Calls to Any Area of the Country at 4 (WCB, EB, CGB, May 15, 2019).

⁵⁷ We note that the consumer complaint numbers are approximations due to variations in how these complaints are categorized.

⁵⁸ We also acknowledge that it is optimal to evaluate efficacy on the basis of multi-year trendline data.

evidence indicates that the Commission's rules have been effective in addressing rural call completion issues.⁵⁹

IV. REQUEST FOR COMMENT

14. As directed by the Commission in the *Fourth Rural Call Completion Order*, we seek comment on the effectiveness of the intermediate provider quality standards “in preventing intermediate providers, both those that also operate as covered providers and those that do not, from engaging in behavior that leads to call [completion] problems and on whether the rural call completion problems that these rules were intended to address have improved or changed.”⁶⁰ Is there any difference in the effectiveness of the rules between those intermediate providers that are also covered providers and those that are not? Are any data available to assess the effectiveness of these rules? Should the Commission consider any additional changes to its rural call completion rules to better effectuate the completion of calls to rural areas? If so, what changes? For commenters that believe these rules to be ineffective, what accounts for the apparent reduction in rural call completion problems documented in this Report?

V. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

15. *Filing Requirements.* Pursuant to section 1.419 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR § 1.419, interested parties may file comments on or before October 29, 2020. All filings should refer to WC Docket No. 13-39. Filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission. Comments may be filed by paper or by using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS). See *Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, 63 FR 24121 (1998).

- Electronic Filers: Comments may be filed electronically using the Internet by accessing the ECFS: <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/>.
- Paper Filers: Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and one copy of each filing. If more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of this proceeding, filers must submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number.
 - Filings can be sent by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail. All filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission.
 - Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9050 Junction Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701.
 - U.S. Postal Service first-class, Express, and Priority mail must be addressed to 445 12th Street, SW, Washington DC 20554
 - Effective March 19, 2020, and until further notice, the Commission no longer accepts any hand or messenger delivered filings. This is a temporary measure taken to help protect the health and safety of individuals, and to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19. See FCC Announces Closure of FCC Headquarters Open Window and Change in Hand-Delivery Policy, Public Notice, DA 20-304 (March 19, 2020). <https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-closes-headquarters-open-window-and-changes-hand-delivery-policy>.

16. *People with Disabilities.* To request materials in accessible formats for people with

⁵⁹ Notwithstanding the favorable trends discussed in this Report, we note that investigation and enforcement of the rural call completion rules and related Commission orders may nevertheless continue to be necessary in individual cases.

⁶⁰ *Fourth Rural Call Completion Order*, 34 FCC Rcd at 1786, para. 13.

disabilities (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to fcc504@fcc.gov or call the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau at (202) 418-0530 (voice) or (202) 418-0432 (tty).

17. *Ex Parte Rules.* Proceedings in this Notice shall be treated as a “permit-but-disclose” proceeding in accordance with the Commission's *ex parte* rules.⁶¹ Persons making *ex parte* presentations must file a copy of any written presentation or a memorandum summarizing any oral presentation within two business days after the presentation (unless a different deadline applicable to the Sunshine period applies). Persons making oral *ex parte* presentations are reminded that memoranda summarizing the presentation must (1) list all persons attending or otherwise participating in the meeting at which the *ex parte* presentation was made, and (2) summarize all data presented and arguments made during the presentation. If the presentation consisted in whole or in part of the presentation of data or arguments already reflected in the presenter's written comments, memoranda or other filings in the proceeding, the presenter may provide citations to such data or arguments in his or her prior comments, memoranda, or other filings (specifying the relevant page and/or paragraph numbers where such data or arguments can be found) in lieu of summarizing them in the memorandum. Documents shown or given to Commission staff during *ex parte* meetings are deemed to be written *ex parte* presentations and must be filed consistent with rule 1.1206(b). In proceedings governed by rule 1.49(f) or for which the Commission has made available a method of electronic filing, written *ex parte* presentations and memoranda summarizing oral *ex parte* presentations, and all attachments thereto, must be filed through the electronic comment filing system available for that proceeding, and must be filed in their native format (e.g., .doc, .xml, .ppt, searchable .pdf). Participants in these proceedings should familiarize themselves with the Commission's *ex parte* rules.

18. For further information, please contact Zach Ross, Attorney Advisor, Competition Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau at (202) 418-1033 or by email at zachary.ross@fcc.gov.

VI. ORDERING CLAUSES

19. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED that, pursuant to the authority delegated pursuant to Section 0.91 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR § 0.91, and pursuant to the delegations in paragraph 51 of the *Second Rural Call Completion Order* and paragraph 13 of the *Fourth Rural Call Completion Order*, this Report in WC Docket No. 13-39 IS ADOPTED.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Kris Anne Monteith
Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau

⁶¹ See 47 CFR §§ 1.1200(a), 1.1206.