

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

|                                 |   |                      |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| In the Matter of                | ) |                      |
|                                 | ) |                      |
| Telephone Number Portability    | ) | CC Docket No. 95-116 |
|                                 | ) |                      |
| Numbering Resource Optimization | ) | CC Docket No. 99-200 |

**ORDER**

**Adopted: August 31, 2021**

**Released: August 31, 2021**

By the Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau:

1. On Sunday, August 28, 2021, Hurricane Ida struck the Gulf Coast of the United States as a Category 4 hurricane, causing significant damage in the states of Louisiana and Mississippi.<sup>1</sup> Hurricane Ida is causing massive flooding, resulting in significant property damage and personal injury. It is also causing substantial service disruptions and outages in telephone service in Louisiana and Mississippi and its effects are expected to continue for at least the next several days.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Homeland Security, announced that the President has signed emergency declarations for Louisiana, and Mississippi due to Hurricane Ida.<sup>3</sup> To assist telephone subscribers in those areas, we grant, on our own motion, a temporary waiver of the Commission’s telephone number “aging” rule. Specifically, we waive section 52.15(f)(ii), which states that service providers may only age telephone numbers that have been disconnected for up to 90 days before assigning them to other customers.<sup>4</sup>

2. There is good cause for this waiver, as required by section 1.3 of our rules.<sup>5</sup> Assisting residential subscribers who are dealing with the effects of a hurricane or major storm is in the public interest and thus warrants a temporary waiver of section 52.15(f)(ii) of the Commission’s rules. Waiver

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<sup>1</sup> See Bulletin, U.S. National Weather Service, Hurricane Ida to Produce Life Threatening Impacts through Monday (Aug. 29, 2021); Bulletin, U.S. National Weather Service, Forecast to Strengthen Rapidly Before Landfall...Life-Threatening Storm Surge, Potentially Catastrophic Wind Damage and Flooding Rainfall Expected to Impact the Northern Gulf Cost Beginning Sunday Morning, (Aug. 28, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/text/refresh/MIATCPAT4+shtml/282353.shtml>. See also FEMA, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Approves Emergency Declaration for Mississippi (Aug. 28, 2021), <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20210829/president-joseph-r-biden-jr-approves-emergency-declaration-mississippi> (last visited Aug. 29, 2021) and President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Approves Emergency Declaration for Louisiana (Aug. 27, 2021), <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20210827/president-joseph-r-biden-jr-approves-emergency-declaration-louisiana> (last visited August 29, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> 47 CFR § 52.15(f)(ii) (“Aging numbers are disconnected numbers that are not available for assignment to another end user or customer for a specified period of time. Numbers previously assigned to residential customers may be aged for no more than 90 days.”).

<sup>5</sup> 47 CFR § 1.3 (providing that “[a]ny provision of the rules may be waived by the Commission on its own motion or on petition if good cause therefore is shown”).

of section 52.15(f)(ii) will allow service providers in the affected areas, upon customers' request, to disconnect temporarily customers' telephone service to avoid billing issues, and then reinstate the customers' same numbers when service is reconnected. This waiver applies to all companies that provide service in areas of Louisiana and Mississippi affected by Hurricane Ida. This waiver is in effect immediately and for a nine-month period, expiring on May 31, 2022. This waiver of the aging rule will also apply, without need for further action by the Wireline Competition Bureau, to residential customers in other areas for which the President declares states of emergency, either due to Hurricane Ida or to later storms during the 2021-22 hurricane season. These waivers will expire 270 days from the date the President declares a state of emergency for the area(s) affected.

3. Also, because of substantial damage to telecommunications systems we expect to be caused by Hurricane Ida to areas within its path, we encourage all service providers in the areas affected by Hurricane Ida to waive call forwarding, message center, and voicemail service charges for affected customers, to the extent lawfully permitted, until the customers' service is restored.

4. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED, pursuant to sections 4(i), 251(b)(2), and 251(e) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. §§ 154(i), 251(b)(2) and 251(e), and sections 0.291 and 1.3 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR §§ 0.291, 1.3, that section 52.15(f)(ii), 47 CFR § 52.15(f)(ii), is waived to the extent herein described herein.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Kris A. Monteith  
Chief  
Wireline Competition Bureau