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FCC ESTABLISHES FEDERAL-STATE JOINT CONFERENCE TO PROMOTE ADVANCED BROADBAND SERVICES

*Joint Conference to Play a Key Role in Ensuring Widespread Deployment
of Advanced Telecommunications Services*

Washington, D.C. – Today, as part of the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) ongoing efforts to ensure that advanced services and technologies are deployed as rapidly as possible to all Americans, the FCC adopted an Order convening a Federal-State Joint Conference on advanced telecommunications services. The Joint Conference will provide a forum for an ongoing dialogue between the Commission, state regulators, and local and regional entities regarding the deployment of advanced telecommunications capabilities.

Ensuring that advanced services will be made available to all Americans is an effort that must be undertaken on various levels – federal, state, local, and regional. Accordingly, the Federal-State Joint Conference will further that effort by facilitating the cooperative development of federal, state, and local mechanisms and policies that will promote widespread and rapid deployment of advanced services.

Specifically, the Conference will serve as a forum to:

- examine how best to accelerate the deployment of affordable advanced services to rural and other under-served telecommunications users,
- conduct an ongoing, cooperative dialogue regarding deployment of advanced services;
- promote an exchange of information between and among state and federal jurisdictions; and,
- explore regulatory and deregulatory mechanisms that will facilitate the widespread availability of advanced services.

In particular, the Joint Conference will focus on monitoring advanced services deployment, combining federal-state data collection efforts, minimizing potential inconsistencies and overlaps between federal and state policy, and coordinating federal-state initiatives to promote deployment of advanced services.

State regulators have already endorsed the Joint Conference. At its July meeting, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) adopted a resolution endorsing the establishment of the Conference.

The Joint Conference will be chaired by the Chairman of the FCC and be comprised of the four other Federal commissioners and up to five State commissioners that would be recommended by NARUC. The Federal-State Joint Conference is convened pursuant to section 410(b) of the Communications Act.

Action by the Commission on October 8, 1999, by Order in CC Docket No. 99-294 (FCC #99-293). Chairman Kennard, Commissioners Ness, Furchtgott-Roth, Powell and Tristani.

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