



# NEWS

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

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
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**COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS:**  
**FCC DECISION “PRESERVES COMPETITIVE TOOLS” BUT**  
**“ENDANGERS BROADBAND CONSUMERS AND COMPETITION”**

FCC Commissioner Michael J. Copps stated today that through the Commission’s Triennial Review decision: “We preserve voice competition in the local markets and we give competitors the tools to grow. We accord the states an enhanced role in making the granular determinations about where the rules of the game may need to be changed and where they should be maintained in order to foster competition. One month ago, these gains were not expected.”

At the same time, Copps expressed disappointment with the Commission’s treatment of broadband services. “We are playing fast and loose with the country’s broadband future” Copps stated. “Today we may be choking off competition in broadband. Consumers and the Internet itself may well suffer.”

Commissioner Copps agreed to the parts of the Order that protected competition, but concurred with or dissented from other sections that undermined Congress’s vision for local competition.

Copps continued: “It is no secret that some parties urged us to go much further today toward a wholesale upending of the current telecommunications landscape just when competition was beginning to take hold. Instead of preserving, protecting and defending competition, the idea seemed to be to tear away the infrastructure that undergirds that competition. Today’s decision is not just a big-ticket item for telephone companies on one side or another of some admittedly arcane issues. It affects us all. It will determine the size of your phone bill. It will support or undermine the future of broadband and the Internet. It will deeply affect our country’s future. We’ve got to make good, smart decisions. On broadband, at least, we haven’t done this.”

Today’s Order concerns the rules Congress instructed the FCC to create to develop local competition for telecommunications services, as part of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. Local competition benefits customers through lower prices, greater innovation, and improved service quality.