

STATEMENT
COMMISSIONER ROBERT M. McDOWELL

Re: Telephone Number Requirements for IP-Enabled Services Providers, Local Number Portability Porting Interval and Validation Requirements, IP-Enabled Services, Telephone Number Portability, CTIA Petitions for Declaratory Ruling on Wireline-Wireless Porting Issues, Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis, Numbering Resource Optimization, Report and Order, Declaratory Ruling, Order on Remand, and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 07-188), WC Docket No. 07-243, WC Docket No. 07-244 WC Docket No. 04-36, CC Docket No. 95-116, CC Docket No. 99-200

The steps we are taking today promote consumer freedom in the voice and information service markets by allowing customers to port their telephone number to and from Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services across all platforms. In this world of converging telecommunications technologies, it is vital that the Commission ensure that our regulations do not favor one type of service provider over another and that consumers are empowered to choose among all the services these new technologies offer. By extending local numbering portability requirements to VoIP providers, we now give consumers the ability to keep their telephone numbers when they decide to switch to or from wireline, wireless or VoIP services. Furthermore, the obligation to port numbers quickly and efficiently will further benefit consumers when they switch providers and give regulatory certainty to market players.

Our action today also fosters regulatory parity. Because VoIP services are increasingly becoming a substitute for traditional telephone service in the marketplace, it is critical that we extend local number portability obligations to those service providers. Just as we have previously required interconnected VoIP providers to comply with obligations for E911, universal service, customer proprietary network information protections and disability access, extending our local number portability requirements levels out the regulatory landscape even further.

However, in an effort to refine our overall numbering obligations, we seek comment on a number of specific issues affecting the extent of obligations and elements of the porting process. I will be particularly interested to review the comments regarding the validation of port requests and porting intervals.