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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 3, 2008

JOINT STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONERS MICHAEL J. COPPS, JONATHAN S. ADELSTEIN, DEBORAH TAYLOR TATE AND ROBERT M. MCDOWELL

Below is a Joint Statement from the above-referenced commissioners in response to the decision to remove the intercarrier compensation and universal service proposals from tomorrow's agenda:

“Three weeks ago, Chairman Martin first shared with the Commission his proposals to fundamentally reform the intercarrier compensation and universal service systems. Four Commissioners provided the Chairman bi-partisan, constructive and substantive suggestions, and stated that notice and comment should be sought on the proposals, with an understanding that we would all be prepared to vote on December 18. We also have asked the Chairman to narrowly address the ISP-bound traffic remand and the Joint Board's Recommendation. We therefore are disappointed that the Chairman has withdrawn the fundamental reform item from tomorrow's agenda.

“We approached this proceeding with the common goal of modernizing our universal service and intercarrier compensation policies, and commend the desire to tackle some of the most important issues facing this Commission. It is equally important to ensure that any reform proposal receive the full benefit of public notice and comment - especially in light of the difficult economic circumstances currently facing our nation.

“We remain committed to fulfilling our obligation to tackle these difficult issues, and have set forth a reasonable path for completing comprehensive reform. We remain hopeful that the consensus process we have pursued regarding this issue will ultimately lead to a thoughtful, well-reasoned item that will inure to the benefit all Americans.”