



NEWS

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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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STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS ON CHAIRMAN GENACHOWSKI'S ANNOUNCEMENT TO RECLASSIFY BROADBAND

“Today Chairman Genachowski announced his plan to remove the legal cloud hanging over the FCC’s ability to protect America’s broadband users. This plan can put us on the right road—if we travel that road swiftly, surely and with the primary goal of protecting consumers foremost in our minds.

“Frankly, I would have preferred plain and simple Title II reclassification through a declaratory ruling and limited, targeted forbearance—wiping the slate clean of all question marks. The quicker we can bring some sense of surety and stability to the present confusion emanating from the Comcast court decision, the better off consumers—and industry, too—will be.

“But we should welcome this step toward bringing broadband back under the Title II framework where it belongs. It was a travesty to move it in the first place, and those decisions caused consumers, small businesses and the country enormous competitive disadvantage.

“The devil will be in the details as we work to put the Commission back on solid legal footing. For example, it is clear that broadband will merit some forbearance from certain Title II stipulations, but we must avoid another forbearance binge. We experienced a mad rush to forbearance in previous Commissions and it usually created many more problems than it resolved. We must also understand that the world of technology changes at warp speed and we must protect against any unintended consequences of forbearance or closing other doors that may need to be opened down the road. As we address the short-term legal problems before us, I hope we will have the good sense to avoid boxing ourselves in on our ability to react to future changes in technology and the economy. The path we start down today must do more than just put this agency’s authority over broadband back on life-support—it must ensure our going-forward, healthy ability to protect consumers. One near-death experience is enough.”

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