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**For Immediate Release****FCC PROPOSES ENHANCEMENTS TO  
WIRELESS EMERGENCY ALERTS**

WASHINGTON, November 19, 2015 – The Federal Communications Commission today proposed rules to strengthen Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), a system that delivers critical warnings and information to Americans on their wireless phones. The proposals are intended to promote the wider use and effectiveness of this lifesaving service, especially for state and local authorities to convey important information to their communities.

Since its launch in 2012, WEA has informed Americans about severe weather, missing children, and other emergencies via text-like alerts to their wireless phones. Now that the FCC has three years' experience with the service, and in light of stakeholder feedback and technological advancements since the FCC adopted technical and procedural requirements for WEA in 2008, the agency is seeking comment on potential enhancements.

In a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) adopted today, the Commission proposed changes to improve WEA message content, ensure that the messages reach only those people for whom an alert is relevant, and to establish a WEA testing program that will improve the effectiveness of the system for public safety officials and the public. The NPRM includes proposals to:

- Increase the maximum length of WEA messages (from 90 to 360 characters) in order to convey more information;
- Enable alerts to contain embedded phone numbers and URLs to improve message quality and accessibility;
- Create a new class of WEA alerts (“Emergency Government Information”) as a means of sending action-oriented public safety advisories (such as “boil water” messages or information on shelter locations during weather emergencies) to communities;
- Require participating wireless providers to deliver the alerts to more granular geographic areas; and
- Make it easier for state and local authorities to test WEA service and train personnel.

The Commission is also seeking comment on a variety of other potential improvements, including the technical feasibility of implementing multilingual and multimedia alerting. In addition, the Commission is seeking comment on steps it can take to promote Americans' participation in WEA, including options for personalizing the display and receipt of WEA messages.

Taken together, these proposals are designed to ensure that WEA keeps pace with evolving technologies and empowers communities to initiate these lifesaving alerts.

For more information on Wireless Emergency Alerts, visit [www.fcc.gov/guides/wireless-emergency-alerts-wea](http://www.fcc.gov/guides/wireless-emergency-alerts-wea).

Action by the Commission November 19, 2015, by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 15-154). Chairman Wheeler, Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel, Pai, and O’Rielly approving. Chairman Wheeler, Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel, Pai, and O’Rielly issuing statements.

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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. Cir. 1974).*