



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

February 10, 2016

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Carper:

On December 16, 2015, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) publicly released a report entitled *Internet Protocol Transition - FCC Should Strengthen Its Data Collection Efforts to Assess the Transition's Effects* – GAO-16-167 (“Report”). The Report recommends that “[t]o strengthen FCC’s data collection efforts, the Chairman of FCC should develop a strategy to gather additional information on the IP transition to assess the transition’s potential effects on public safety and consumers.”¹ As the Commission’s Public Safety & Homeland Security Bureau observed in its response to the draft report, the Commission already receives and utilizes data from multiple sources.² At the same time, however, we fundamentally agree with GAO on the importance of data and data collection efforts to the IP transition process.

As the Report notes, the Commission needs to ensure that it has sufficient, accurate, and comprehensive information in order to make data-driven decisions and to address areas of uncertainty.³ During the nation’s ongoing transition from circuit-switched technology and services to IP based networks, the Commission will continue to execute on its existing strategy to obtain data necessary to ensure that core values remain intact through the tech transitions with present resource commitment levels.⁴ At the same time, the Commission recognizes that “big-data” capabilities will allow us to obtain better situational awareness of the communications infrastructure and be better able to spot critical communications issues early and take targeted action when needed. Consequently, the Commission will dedicate resources towards upgrading FCC systems and software required to achieve this capability. While upgrading these FCC systems and software will involve the dedication of significant resources, we believe that this investment will be well worth it for the American public. I have testified before Congress about the need for such big data analytical capability to be able to determine what’s happening

¹ Report at 29.

² The Commission’s discussion of its multi-faceted technology transition oversight efforts and strategy are detailed in its Letter Response appended to the Report, *see id.* at 1-6. These efforts include multiple proceedings, engagement efforts with private stakeholders, and ongoing data collection efforts to monitor, analyze and address IP transition issues. The Commission’s multi-faceted and robust technology transition oversight efforts are designed to preserve competition and protect public safety during the IP transition. Those efforts, as described, are robust and ongoing.

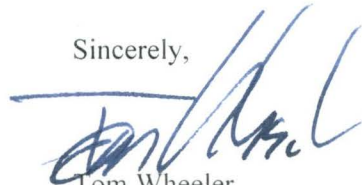
³ Report at GAO Highlights.

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to our networks and to be able to connect the dots in a way that is not possible with the current Network Outage Reporting System.⁵

The value of a big data approach is clear. Timely Commission access and analysis of the right data will permit us to more effectively execute our core mandates of promoting competition, protecting consumers, and achieving universal service while ensuring public safety. We appreciate GAO's analysis and recommendation, and we share its concern that the Commission be able to expand and strengthen its data efforts. While this effort will be resource-intensive, we agree with GAO that big data analysis capability development will need to be integrated into the FCC's program in future years and will work with Congress to achieve that objective.

Sincerely,



Tom Wheeler

cc: The Honorable Bill Nelson
The Honorable Frank Pallone

⁵ FCC Oversight Hearing: Before the Subcomm. On Commc'n and Tech. of the H. Comm. Energy and Com., 114th Cong. (Nov. 17, 2015) (testimony of FCC Chmn. Tom Wheeler).



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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February 10, 2016

The Honorable Jason Chaffetz
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Chaffetz:

On December 16, 2015, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) publicly released a report entitled *Internet Protocol Transition - FCC Should Strengthen Its Data Collection Efforts to Assess the Transition's Effects* – GAO-16-167 (“Report”). The Report recommends that “[t]o strengthen FCC’s data collection efforts, the Chairman of FCC should develop a strategy to gather additional information on the IP transition to assess the transition’s potential effects on public safety and consumers.”

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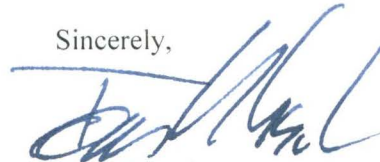
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February 10, 2016

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Cummings:

On December 16, 2015, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) publicly released a report entitled *Internet Protocol Transition - FCC Should Strengthen Its Data Collection Efforts to Assess the Transition's Effects* – GAO-16-167 (“Report”). The Report recommends that “[t]o strengthen FCC’s data collection efforts, the Chairman of FCC should develop a strategy to gather additional information on the IP transition to assess the transition’s potential effects on public safety and consumers.”¹ As the Commission’s Public Safety & Homeland Security Bureau observed in its response to the draft report, the Commission already receives and utilizes data from multiple sources.² At the same time, however, we fundamentally agree with GAO on the importance of data and data collection efforts to the IP transition process.

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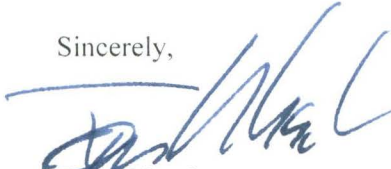
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February 10, 2016

The Honorable Ron Johnson
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Johnson:

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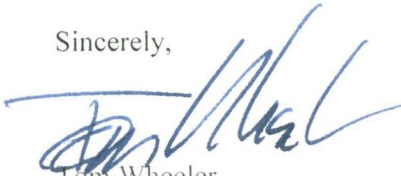
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