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For Immediate Release

**FCC CHARTS COURSE TO COMPREHENSIVE HEARING AID COMPATIBILITY
FOR CONSUMERS WITH HEARING LOSS**

***Commission Adopts a Landmark Agreement Between Consumer Advocates and Industry
Associations as the Pathway to Compatibility for 100 Percent of Wireless Devices***

WASHINGTON, August 4, 2016 – Today, the FCC took several steps to implement new rules to ensure that people with hearing loss have full access to innovative wireless devices. The action taken today has several parts, all of which will modernize existing hearing aid compatibility rules while maintaining the balance between fostering accessibility and promoting innovation and investment.

With this Report and Order, the Commission amends the hearing aid compatibility requirements that are generally applicable to wireless service providers and manufacturers of digital wireless handsets. Specifically, the Commission increases the number of hearing aid compatible handsets that service providers and manufacturers are required to offer by setting two new percentage benchmarks:

- 66 percent of offered handset models must be compliant following a two-year transition period for manufacturers, with additional compliance time for service providers, and
- 85 percent of offered handset models must be compliant following a five-year transition period for manufacturers, with additional compliance time for service providers.

The new rules establish a more limited obligation for entities offering only four or five handsets.

The Commission reconfirms its commitment to pursuing 100 percent compatibility within eight years, and we encourage stakeholders to keep us informed about evolutions in technology and market conditions that impact hearing aid compatibility.

Digital wireless handset manufacturers, consumer groups and wireless service providers have devoted time, effort and expertise to this groundbreaking collaborative effort. The revisions adopted today are a reflection of that collaboration and will ensure greater access to wireless communications services for Americans with hearing loss.

Action by the Commission August 4, 2016 by Report and Order (FCC 16-103). Chairman Wheeler, Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel, Pai and O’Rielly approving and issuing separate statements.

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