



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

December 14, 2016

The Honorable Patrick Murphy  
U.S. House of Representatives  
211 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Murphy:

Thank you for your letter requesting that the Commission encourage wireless carriers to waive data overage charges to consumers impacted by Hurricane Matthew.

I agree that it is important for individuals to access vital public safety information during major storm events. To help customers affected by Hurricane Matthew, Verizon and AT&T waived data overage fees for their customers in the impacted counties in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.<sup>1</sup> Other telecommunications providers also let all consumers in these areas—including non-subscribers—use cable Wi-Fi hotspots to connect their wireless devices to the Internet.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew, the major wireless carriers—AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, U.S. Cellular, and Verizon—implemented the Wireless Network Resiliency Cooperative Framework (Framework) for the first time. This voluntary initiative, launched by the carriers and CTIA in April 2016, enhances wireless service continuity, coordination, and information-sharing during and after emergencies and disasters.<sup>2</sup> Pursuant to the Framework, the carriers implemented emergency roaming procedures and worked with state and local government agencies on restoration efforts.

During and after the storm, the Commission also activated its Disaster Information Reporting System (DIRS). This web-based system is used by communications companies to provide information on communications infrastructure outages during times of crisis. The FCC worked closely with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) throughout the storm to collect and analyze the data received from DIRS, which used information from over 3,000 contacts in various communications industry segments. The Commission's website also provided daily updates on the status of communications networks in the affected areas.

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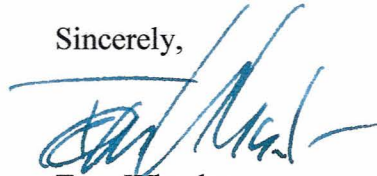
<sup>1</sup> Press Release, AT&T Inc., AT&T Waiving Overage Charges For Those Affected By Hurricane Matthew, (Oct. 7, 2016), <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/att-waiving-coverage-charges-for-those-affected-by-hurricane-matthew-300341285.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Joan Marsh, AT&T Services Inc.; Charles McKee, Sprint; Grant Spellmeyer, U.S. Cellular; Scott Bergmann, CTIA; Steve Sharkey, T-Mobile USA; and William H. Johnson, Verizon, to Marlene Dortch, Secretary, Federal Communications Commission at 1 (Apr. 27, 2016) (on file in PS Docket No. 13-239).

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I appreciate your interest in this matter and look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure that the public can communicate and receive essential information during times of emergency. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Wheeler", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom Wheeler