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**For Immediate Release****FCC SEEKS COMMENT ON MODERNIZING TOLL FREE  
NUMBERING SYSTEM**

WASHINGTON, September 26, 2017 – The Federal Communications Commission is proposing to modernize the way it distributes toll free numbers, including popular numbers in the new 833 toll free area code, such as 833-LAWYERS or 833-333-3333.

Among the proposals is the use of a competitive auction to assign approximately 17,000 sought-after numbers in the new 833 code. Another proposal would set aside toll free numbers to promote health and safety for use by non-profits and government, without cost.

More broadly, the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking adopted by the Commission today seeks comment on how to make toll free number distribution more equitable and efficient than the existing 20-year-old system. The goal: to provide the public with a better opportunity to acquire the numbers they want, to recognize the value of unique numbers, and create incentives for toll free numbers to be put to use quickly and efficiently once they are assigned.

Toll free calling originated in 1967 and remains important to large and small businesses for sales, customer service, advertising, and marketing, even with the growth of e-commerce. Non-profit organizations and government also use toll free numbers to provide vital health and safety services to the public.

Currently, toll free numbers are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. But this system does not consider the need for or the value placed on particular numbers. In addition, questions have been raised about whether organizations with better connectivity to the toll free number database have an unfair advantage in reserving desirable numbers.

To address these and other problems, the Notice proposes adopting a competitive auction for assigning vanity and repeater numbers – such as 833-333-3333 – in the new 833 code for which there is competitive demand. Revenues from the auction would be used to defray the cost of toll free number administration, reducing the cost of numbering for all users.

The Notice also seeks comment on a variety of other means to modernize toll free number assignment and better fulfill the FCC’s mandate to make numbers available on an equitable basis.

Action by the Commission September 26, 2017 by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 17-124). Chairman Pai, Commissioners O’Rielly, Carr and Rosenworcel approving. Commissioner Clyburn dissenting. Chairman Pai, Commissioners Clyburn, O’Rielly, Carr and Rosenworcel

issuing separate statements.

WC Docket No. 17-192; CC Docket No. 95-155

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