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For Immediate Release**FCC TAKES NEW STEPS TO IMPROVE RURAL CALL COMPLETION*****New Rule Holds Provider Selecting Long-Distance Call Routing Responsible***

WASHINGTON, April 17, 2018—The Federal Communications Commission today adopted new measures to tackle the problem of failed or poor-quality long-distance calls to rural parts of the United States.

All Americans should have confidence that when a call is made to them, they will receive it. Unfortunately, that's often not the case in rural America. A caller placing a long-distance call to a rural home or business may hear ring tones on the line, even though the recipient's phone never rang. And calls may be delayed, inaudible, or labeled with an inaccurate caller ID. These call completion problems have serious economic and personal costs, and potentially threaten public safety in local communities.

Today, the FCC adopted new measures and proposed others to better tackle the problem of call completion and ensure that calls are completed to all Americans. The FCC is employing a multi-faceted approach requiring diverse solutions and aggressive action by all participants in the call completion process.

Calls originating from a long-distance provider may be handed off multiple times to different providers—called intermediate providers—before reaching their final destination. This process is a significant source of rural call completion problems, and the FCC's actions today seek to promote better oversight when routing calls. Following implementation of these rules, the FCC will require providers initially selecting the long-distance route—known as the covered providers—to monitor the performance of intermediate providers, and to take steps to correct performance problems.

Covered providers must take remedial action against intermediate providers, when necessary, and establish a point of contact to address rural call completion issues. However, covered providers will no longer be required to fulfill detailed and burdensome data reporting requirements adopted in the FCC's 2013 Rural Call Completion Order, which have not provided useful information to the Commission and have proven ineffective in deterring call completion failures.

In addition, the FCC is seeking comment on rules to implement the Improving Call Quality and Reliability Act, or RCC Act, signed by the President in February, which gives the FCC new authority to regulate intermediate providers. The RCC Act requires that intermediate providers register with the FCC, and bars covered providers from using non-registered intermediate

providers. It also requires the FCC to establish service quality standards for intermediate providers.

Action by the Commission April 17, 2018 by Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 18-45). Chairman Pai, Commissioners Clyburn, O’Rielly, Carr, and Rosenworcel approving and issuing separate statements.

WC Docket No. 13-39

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