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For Immediate Release

FCC TAKES ADDITIONAL STEPS TO ELIMINATE NEEDLESS BARRIERS TO NEXT-GENERATION NETWORKS AND SERVICES

WASHINGTON, June 7, 2018—The Federal Communications Commission today took additional steps to eliminate unnecessary regulatory hurdles for carriers seeking to move from the networks of yesterday to the networks of tomorrow.

As demand for lower-speed data and legacy voice services declines, the Commission determined that its rules must be modified so that resources that could be used to expand next-generation networks and services aren't unnecessarily diverted to maintaining outdated infrastructure. The current FCC rules entail burdensome requirements that carriers must meet in order to replace legacy voice and lower speed data services. The Commission's action helps to reduce these burdensome requirements while maintaining protections for consumers and providing incentives for deploying better networks.

In a *Second Report and Order* adopted today, the Commission eliminated some unnecessary impediments to timely network upgrades, while ensuring that consumers and businesses receive the services they require and the notice they need to adapt to changing technologies. The Order includes the following revisions:

- Streamlines grandfathering of lower-speed data services where the carrier already provides fixed replacement data services at download speeds of 25 Megabits per second and 3 Mbps for uploads. The streamlined process provides 10 days for public comment, and grandfathering is allowed automatically in 25 days, barring substantive objections.
- Streamlines permanent discontinuance of services already grandfathered by the Commission for 180 days. The process will now provide 10 days for comment and 31 days for an automatic grant.
- Relieves carriers of discontinuance approval obligations for services with no customers and no reasonable requests for service for at least the preceding 30 days.
- Eliminates burdensome, inflexible, and unnecessary education and outreach requirements for carriers discontinuing legacy voice services in the transition to next-generation IP services.
- Allows carriers to seek streamlined discontinuance of legacy voice services when a carrier provides stand-alone interconnected VoIP throughout its affected service area, and at least one other stand-alone, facilities-based voice service is available from another provider.
- Eliminates unnecessary and burdensome or redundant notifications for changes that may impact compatibility of customer premises equipment.

- Facilitates rapid restoration of communications networks in the face of natural disasters and other unforeseen events by eliminating advance notice and waiting period requirements for network changes in exigent circumstances.

The Second Report and Order builds on reforms adopted by the Commission last November to the network change disclosure and discontinuance processes to encourage investment in next-generation networks.

Action by the Commission June 7, 2018 by Second Report and Order (FCC 18-74). Chairman Pai, Commissioners O’Rielly, and Carr approving. Commissioner Rosenworcel approving in part and dissenting in part. Chairman Pai, Commissioners O’Rielly, Carr, and Rosenworcel issuing separate statements.

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