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For Immediate Release

**FCC SPEEDS ACCESS TO UTILITY POLES TO PROMOTE
BROADBAND, 5G DEPLOYMENT**

Access to Poles Must Be Swift, Predictable, and Affordable

WASHINGTON, August 2, 2018—The Federal Communications Commission continued its efforts to promote broadband deployment and competition by speeding the process and reducing the costs of attaching new network facilities to utility poles.

To enable broadband providers to enter new markets and deploy high-speed networks, access to poles must be swift, predictable, safe, and affordable. Pole access also is essential in the race to deploy fast 5G wireless service, which relies on small cells and wireline backhaul.

The Commission fundamentally reformed the federal framework governing pole attachments by adopting a process in which the new attacher moves existing attachments and performs all other work required to make the pole ready for a new attachment. Called “one-touch, make-ready,” this process speeds and reduces the cost of broadband deployment by allowing the party with the strongest incentive—the new attacher—to prepare the pole quickly, rather than spreading the work across multiple parties.

By some estimates, one-touch, make-ready alone could result in approximately 8.3 million incremental premises passed with fiber and about \$12.6 billion in incremental fiber capital expenditures. The process will not apply to more complicated attachments, or above the “communications space” of a pole, where safety and reliability risks are greater, but the Order improves current processes for attachments in these spaces.

The Commission also addressed two forms of state and local regulatory barriers to the deployment of wireline and wireless facilities. The Report and Order makes clear that the FCC will preempt, on a case-by-case basis, state and local laws that inhibit the rebuilding or restoration of broadband infrastructure after a disaster. And in a Declaratory Ruling, the FCC made clear that blanket state and local moratoria on telecommunications services and facilities deployment are barred by the Communications Act because they, in the language of Section 253(a), “prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting the ability of any entity to provide any interstate or intrastate telecommunications service.”

Action by the Commission August 2, 2018 by Report and Order and Declaratory Ruling (FCC 18-111). 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.

WC Docket No. 17-84; WT Docket No. 17-79

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