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**For Immediate Release**

**FCC PROPOSES TO MODERNIZE ITS PRIORITY SERVICES RULES**

*Action Would Help Emergency Personnel Communicate During Disasters*

WASHINGTON, July 16, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission today proposed to modernize and improve its rules for programs that help first responders and other emergency personnel communicate during disasters. The proposed updates would help ensure that these programs meet the needs of emergency personnel now and in the future, as technology advances.

The Department of Homeland Security manages a suite of three priority services programs that help national security and emergency preparedness personnel communicate during emergencies: the Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) System, which requires service providers to prioritize the provisioning and restoration of wired communications facilities; Wireless Priority Service (WPS), a voluntary program that involves service providers prioritizing voice calls on wireless networks; and the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS), a voluntary program that involves service providers prioritizing voice calls on landline networks.

While the Department of Homeland Security manages these programs through contracts with participating communications providers, the Commission also has a long-standing regulatory role with respect to TSP and WPS. The Commission's rules for these programs, however, were adopted when communications networks were primarily based on legacy technology and have not been updated in at least two decades.

In a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking adopted today, the Commission proposed to modernize its priority services rules to cover priority treatment of voice, data, and video services for emergency personnel. The Commission also proposed to streamline these rules by removing outdated requirements that may impede the use of Internet Protocol (IP)-based technologies. In addition, the Commission proposed to amend the rules to reflect current administrative responsibilities for the priority services programs while eliminating burdensome and unnecessary administrative requirements.

Today's action also responds to petitions for rulemaking filed by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security, requesting that the Commission update its priority services rules.

Action by the Commission July 16, 2020 by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 20-97). Chairman Pai, Commissioners O'Rielly, Carr, Rosenworcel, and Starks approving. Chairman Pai, Commissioners O'Rielly, Carr, and Rosenworcel issuing separate statements.

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*This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).*