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For Immediate Release**FCC MODERNIZES OUTDATED REGULATIONS TO ENHANCE
COMPETITION AND BENEFIT CONSUMERS*****Ends Rules That Stifle Broadband Deployment Except in Areas Where They Are
Still Necessary to Promote Competition***

WASHINGTON, October 27, 2020—In light of increasing competition in the telecommunications marketplace, the Federal Communications Commission today eliminated legacy unbundling and resale rules where they stifle technology transitions and broadband deployment. The rules date back to the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which required monopoly local telephone companies to make portions of their networks and services available to competitors at regulated rates. Today’s Report and Order builds upon previous Commission action to adjust those rules to keep pace with advances in the marketplace since passage of the 1996 Act as it has shifted from one dominated by monopoly incumbents to one characterized by vigorous, intermodal competition.

The Order adopted today eliminates rules requiring unbundling of the following network elements, subject to certain conditions and multiyear transition periods:

- *DS1 and DS3 Loops*—These legacy last-mile lines are used primarily by business customers and are being replaced by higher-speed, packet-based services sold by incumbent local exchange carriers (LECs), competitive LECs, cable providers, and other intermodal competitors. The Order ends these unbundling requirements in areas with sufficient evidence of competition but keeps them in place in areas that lack sufficient competition.
- *DS0 Loops*—These network elements are typically used to provide both voice and broadband service using various Digital Subscriber Line technologies. The Order eliminates unbundling requirements for these loops in densely populated areas, which tend to have more competitive options, but preserves unbundling requirements for DS0 loops in less densely populated areas.
- *Legacy Narrowband Voice-Grade Loops*—These network elements are used to provide legacy voice service and have no broadband service capability. Given the shift away from legacy voice services to IP- and wireless-based voice services offered by multiple providers, the Order removes unbundling obligations for narrowband voice-grade loops nationwide.
- *Dark Fiber Transport*—These services provide a connection between phone companies’ local wire centers. The Order eliminates unbundling requirements for dark

fiber transport originating or terminating from a wire center within a half-mile of competitive fiber networks.

The Order also discontinues, subject to a three-year transition period, a requirement that incumbent LECs make available for resale their retail legacy telecommunications services at cost-based rates. These services are predominantly used by competitive LECs to provide legacy voice services to business and government customers.

Many elements of today's Report and Order are consistent with a compromise proposal for determining the appropriate scope of the Commission's unbundling rules in today's marketplace that was reached by major industry buyers and sellers of unbundled network elements.

Action by the Commission October 27, 2020 by Report and Order (FCC 20-152). Chairman Pai, Commissioners O'Rielly and Carr approving. Commissioners Rosenworcel and Starks approving in part and dissenting in part. Chairman Pai, Commissioners Carr, Rosenworcel, and Starks issuing separate statements.

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