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For Immediate Release**FCC TO SHARE COMMUNICATIONS OUTAGE INFORMATION
WITH STATE, FEDERAL, AND TRIBAL NATION AGENCIES*****Action Will Support Faster Service Restoration During Disasters***

WASHINGTON, March 17, 2021—The Federal Communications Commission today adopted a framework for sharing communications outage information with state, federal and Tribal nation agencies to improve their situational awareness, enhance their ability to respond more quickly to outages affecting their communities, and to help save lives, while safeguarding the confidentiality of this data.

The Commission supports the nation's incident preparedness and emergency response efforts by collecting and providing accurate and timely information on the status of communications services and infrastructure through its Network Outage Reporting System (NORS) and Disaster Information Reporting System (DIRS). During disasters, the Commission makes this information available to the Department of Homeland Security, which uses it to assess the needs of affected areas and to coordinate emergency response efforts with state and local first responders.

The Commission's experience with recent major outages—including hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, wildfires, and, most recently, severe winter storms—underscores the value of reliable and timely outage information to the rapid restoration of communications and the crucial role that state and other government authorities play in this restoration. In a Second Report and Order adopted today, the Commission therefore adopted a framework to provide direct, read-only access to NORS and DIRS filings to agencies of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Tribal nations, territories, and federal government that have official duties that make them directly responsible for emergency management and first responder support functions.

The Commission's rules will allow participating agencies to share NORS and DIRS information with first responders and other government officials who play a vital public safety role during crises and have a need to know this information. Participating agencies will also be allowed to publicly disclose information that is aggregated and anonymized.

To protect sensitive communications status data, participating agencies must preserve the confidentiality of NORS and DIRS filings. The Commission adopted an application process that will grant agencies access to this information only after certifying to requirements for maintaining the confidentiality of the data and the security of the databases.

Action by the Commission March 17, 2021 by Second Report and Order (FCC 21-34). Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr, Starks, and Simington approving. Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr and Starks issuing separate statements.

PS Docket No. 15-80

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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).