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**For Immediate Release**

**FCC LAUNCHES RULEMAKING TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS  
RELIABILITY DURING DISASTERS**

WASHINGTON, September 30, 2021—The Federal Communications Commission today launched a rulemaking proceeding to improve the reliability of communications networks and help ensure that the public can communicate when disasters strike.

Recent hurricanes, wildfires, earthquakes, and ice storms demonstrate that America’s communications infrastructure remains susceptible to disruption during disasters. Disaster recovery efforts in the wireless industry are currently supported by the Wireless Network Resiliency Cooperative Framework, a voluntary industry agreement to promote resilient communications and situational awareness during disasters through roaming agreements, mutual aid, and other measures. The Commission today adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that seeks comment on potential improvements to the Framework, including evaluating what triggers its activation, its scope of participants, whether existing Framework elements can be strengthened, any gaps that need to be addressed, and whether the public would benefit from codifying some or all of the Framework in the Commission’s rules.

As part of its own network resiliency efforts, the Commission monitors communications outage data submitted to its mandatory Network Outage Reporting System (NORS) and voluntary Disaster Information Reporting System (DIRS). The Commission uses this information to provide critical situational awareness during outages and analyze outage trends. Today’s action seeks comment on ways to enhance the information supplied through these systems by communications providers, including how to encourage greater participation in DIRS and whether broadband service outages should be reported in NORS.

Last, because commercial power outages are a significant cause of communications network outages after disasters, today’s action seeks comment on improving backup power availability at key communications sites, enhancing coordination between communications providers and power companies, and other measures to reduce power-related disruptions to communications services.

Action by the Commission September 30, 2021 by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 21-99). Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr, Starks, and Simington approving and issuing separate statements.

PS Docket Nos. 21-346, 15-80; ET Docket No. 04-35

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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).*