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For Immediate Release

**FCC PROPOSES TO EXPAND AUDIO DESCRIPTION REGULATIONS
TO ALL REMAINING MARKETS**

***Expansion Would Ensure that Individuals who are Blind or Visually
Impaired have Nationwide Access to Broadcast Video Programming***

WASHINGTON, March 16, 2023—The Federal Communications Commission today proposed to expand audio description regulations to all remaining market areas where the requirement does not already apply. Audio description inserts narrated descriptions of a television program’s key visual elements during natural pauses in the program’s dialogue. The proposal would ensure that video programming is more accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired, helping them be more connected, informed, and entertained by television programming.

The audio description regulations previously applied to the top 60 designated market areas (DMAs). Pursuant to the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010, the Commission may phase in the audio description regulations for an additional 10 DMAs per year if it determines that the costs for program owners, providers, and distributors in those additional markets are reasonable. In 2020, the Commission made such a determination when it adopted a phased expansion of the audio description regulations to DMAs 61 through 100. That expansion will conclude with DMAs 91 through 100 on January 1, 2024.

In its 2020 order, the Commission also committed to examining in 2023 whether to continue expanding the audio description requirements to an additional 10 markets per year. Accordingly, today’s FNPRM seeks comment on whether it should continue this expansion until all 210 DMAs are covered. It proposes that if the Commission determines that the costs are reasonable, the phase-in should continue with DMAs 101 through 110 on January 1, 2025, and extend to an additional 10 DMAs per year, concluding with DMAs 201 through 210 on January 1, 2035.

Action by the Commission March 16, 2023 by Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 23-20). Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr, Starks, and Simington approving. Chairwoman Rosenworcel and Commissioner Starks issuing separate statements.

MB Docket No. 11-43

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