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For Immediate Release**FCC REQUIRES VIDEO CONFERENCING PLATFORMS TO BE ACCESSIBLE AND PROPOSES PLATFORM INTEGRATION WITH SIGN-LANGUAGE SERVICES**

WASHINGTON, June 8, 2023—Today, the Federal Communications Commission voted to require video conferencing platforms, like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or Webex, to comply with the accessibility requirements under the Communications Act and agency rules that govern interoperable video conferencing services.

Video conferencing is routinely used by millions of people for workplace conferences, classes, and conversations with family and friends. Yet, for many people with disabilities, making effective use of video conferencing continues to be a challenge. Reported problems include lack of—or inferior—captioning; ineffective display of sign language interpreters; inability of blind or low-vision users to find and use volume controls; and insufficient user control of accessibility tools. Further, there is no easy way to use telecommunications relay services (TRS) on video conferencing platforms. Today’s action includes several steps to ensure that video conferencing is accessible to all.

The Report and Order adopted today resolves a long-standing legal question that has caused uncertainty for industry and hindered the use of video conferencing by people with disabilities. The FCC concludes that the accessibility requirements of section 716 of the Act and Part 14 of the Commission’s rules apply to all services and equipment meeting the definition of “interoperable video conference service”. Interoperable video conference service providers will have one year and 30 days from the publication of the Federal Register summary to comply with this guidance.

In addition, the FCC proposes to amend Part 14 of the Commission’s rules to add specific performance objectives for enhancing the accessibility of interoperable video conferencing services, including: speech-to-text (captioning) capabilities; text-to-speech capabilities; and enabling the use of visual language interpreting. Additionally, today’s Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeks comment on the integration of TRS with video conferencing services without requiring a dial-up telephone call.

Lastly, today’s Order waives for Video Relay Service (VRS) providers for one year, subject to conditions, a rule that restricts VRS users’ ability to turn off their video cameras when not actively participating in a video conference.

Action by the Commission June 8, 2023 by Report and Order and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 23-50). Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr, Starks, and

Simington approving. Chairwoman Rosenworcel and Commissioner Starks issuing separate statements.

CG Docket Nos. 23-161, 10-213, 03-123

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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).