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For Immediate Release

FCC PROPOSES NEW EMERGENCY ALERT CODE FOR MISSING AND ENDANGERED PERSONS

The Proposed New Event Code Would Help Issue Ashanti Alerts to the Public About Missing Endangered Adults, Build on Efforts to Collect Data on Missing Native and Indigenous Person Cases

WASHINGTON, March 14, 2024—The Federal Communications Commission today proposed a new event code option to deliver critical messages to the public over television and radio about missing and endangered adult persons. Adding a new “Missing and Endangered Persons” event code to the nation’s Emergency Alert System would help law enforcement agencies to issue timely alerts in accordance with the Ashanti Alert Act and galvanize public attention to these cases.

Similar to how law enforcement agencies successfully use AMBER Alerts on TV and radio to help mobilize public attention and recover abducted children, this new Missing and Endangered Persons event code would trigger Ashanti Alerts to sound the alarm over other missing and endangered persons. This initiative would be particularly beneficial to the thousands of missing native and indigenous women who have disappeared from their homes.

Alert originators, such as local public safety officials, use the Emergency Alert System by selecting from a group of event codes based on the nature of the situation (for example, “CAE” signifies a Child Abduction Emergency, otherwise known as an AMBER Alert). This Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeks public comment on creating a new “MEP” alert code for missing and endangered persons who do not meet the criteria for an AMBER Alert. The NPRM also asks about the relationship between this potential new category and the Wireless Emergency Alert system, which does not use event codes like the Emergency Alert System does.

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking adopted today also builds on efforts by the National Congress of American Indians, the Department of Interior, and the Department of Justice to collect comprehensive data on missing and endangered native and indigenous person cases in accordance with Savanna’s Act.

Action by the Commission March 14, 2024 by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 24-30). Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr, Starks, Simington, and Gomez approving. Chairwoman Rosenworcel and Commissioner Gomez issuing separate statements.

PS Docket Nos. 15-91, 15-94

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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).*