



OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN BRENDAN CARR

FCC Accelerating Rollout of Modern, High-Speed Networks

Agency Streamlining Process to Retire Copper Lines, Freeing Up Billions for New Networks

WASHINGTON, March 4, 2026—Today, FCC Chairman Brendan Carr announced that the Commission will vote this month on rules that will get communities off of old and slow copper lines and onto new, high-speed networks. These rules, if adopted by the full Commission at the March 26 Open Meeting, will allow providers to retire their decades-old and increasingly expensive copper line networks, freeing up tens of billions of dollars annually for the roll out of upgraded, high-speed networks to more Americans, all while making sure that consumers remain connected to the public safety and other communications they need at home.

Chairman Carr issued the following statement:

“This FCC decision will free up billions of dollars in private capital so that Americans in communities across the country can go from old and slow copper lines to modern, high-speed ones. For too long, outdated regulations have forced providers to keep consumers on antiquated networks. We will cut through that red tape with this decision. This FCC vote will finally allow those Americans to benefit from an upgrade to next-gen infrastructure. We also are mindful of core consumer protection and public safety requirements. This is another good step forward in the agency’s Build America Agenda.”

Additional Background Information:

As part of this decision, the FCC would take several actions to bring the regulatory environment in line with today’s communications marketplace, while retaining or adopting safeguards to protect public safety and ensure 911 continuity.

The rules, if adopted, would:

- Eliminate the filing requirements associated with FCC rules implementing section 251(c)(5)’s network change disclosure mandate;
- Overhaul and streamline rules applicable to technology transitions discontinuance applications under section 214;
- Grant blanket section 214(a) authority for carriers to grandfather legacy voice services, lower-speed data telecommunications services, and interconnected Voice over IP (VoIP) service provisioned over copper wire; and,
- Eliminate other rule provisions rendered irrelevant.

Furthermore, the record has shown that certain state and local requirements have prolonged the use of legacy networks and hindered the deployment of modern ones. If state and local statutes and regulations force providers to continue devoting resources to maintaining deteriorating legacy networks and provisioning near-obsolete services to an ever-decreasing number of subscribers even after the Commission has allowed the carrier to discontinue a legacy service, those state requirements conflict with federal law and are subject to preemption

The public draft of the Report and Order will be made available tomorrow at:
<https://www.fcc.gov/March2026>.

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