

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JONATHAN S. ADELSTEIN**

Re: *Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities*, CG Docket No. 03-123, CC Docket No. 98-67; *E911 Requirements for IP-Enabled Service Providers*, WC Docket No. 05-196

With this Order, the Commission addresses a number of important issues that are necessary to successfully meet the December 31, 2008 deadline for implementing ten-digit dialing and emergency calling for Internet-based relay services. Consumers have long sought ten-digit dialing and emergency calling -- critical elements of functional equivalency -- and the Commission must do all it can to facilitate a smooth and timely transition. The Commission in this Order provides direction on key details, including clarifying that point-to-point calling must continue to be available to consumers with hearing and speech disabilities, that consumers will continue to be able to dial around to the provider of their choice, and that consumers must be shielded from unauthorized changes to their service.

The Commission and providers now must act swiftly to provide consumers with neutral and objective information about the transition. On December 31st, the Commission, consumers and providers alike will take an important first step toward greater functional equivalency for deaf and hard-of-hearing consumers, but we will need to monitor carefully the process and be ready to act quickly to address consumer questions, concerns, and other issues as they arise. One area for particular vigilance concerns the availability of features and functionality for consumers who switch default providers and the development of competition for customer equipment. As we move forward, we will need to remain particularly watchful about the impact of this transition on consumers, innovation, and the Internet-based relay services market.

Finally, I would like to thank the staff of our Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau and the Wireline Competition Bureau, whose dedication and expertise have been instrumental to meeting this deadline.