

**STATEMENT OF  
CHAIRMAN BRENDAN CARR**

Re: *Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities; Delete, Delete, Delete*, CG Docket No. 03-123; GN Docket No. 25-133.

Since teletypewriters or TTYs were introduced in the 1960s, relay service has evolved significantly. However, at times, the Commission's rules have not kept up with the pace of technological change. Today, we take action to bring our rules into the modern era by eliminating an outdated requirement that TTY-based devices remain capable of communicating in ASCII.

Back in 1991, the Commission required that TTY-based devices must be capable of communicating in two coding formats: Baudot and ASCII. At the time, ASCII was broadly believed to be "a superior technology" for TTY transmission. In fact, it was estimated that ASCII would transmit words at twice the speed per minute. The market delivered a different verdict. It turned out that ASCII was more Betamax than VHS.

Last year, in response to a petition seeking relief from the ASCII requirement, which received widespread support including from a coalition of accessibility advocacy organizations, the Commission proposed removing the ASCII requirement from our TTY rules. The record from that inquiry confirmed what we thought to be true. ASCII calls account for approximately 0.01% of TTY-based communications. Yet, the FCC's rules impose significant costs on TRS providers to maintain ASCII-compatible hardware and software systems.

Today, we voted to eliminate this obsolete rule, freeing up dollars for providers to invest in other accessibility initiatives that will better serve individuals with disabilities.

Thank you to the staff who worked on this item, including Eduard Bartholme, Lisa Edwards, Michael Scott, and Joshua Mendelsohn as well as staff from the Offices of Communications Business Opportunities, Economics and Analytics, Enforcement Bureau, General Counsel, and Managing Director.