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**For Immediate Release**

**FCC SEEKS COMMENT ON WAYS TO ACCELERATE NEXT-GENERATION NETWORKS BY REMOVING REGULATORY BARRIERS**  
*Considers Streamlining Rules to Improve Networks, Spur Job Growth*

WASHINGTON, April 20, 2017 – As part of its effort to expand the availability and affordability of next-generation networks, the Federal Communications Commission today began seeking public comment on a series of steps to remove regulatory barriers to wireline broadband infrastructure deployment.

High-speed broadband is an increasingly important gateway to jobs, health care, education, and information for all Americans. Broadband can create economic opportunity, enabling entrepreneurs to create businesses and immediately reach customers throughout the world. Streamlining rules, expediting approvals, and removing other barriers, where possible, will better enable broadband providers to build, maintain, and upgrade their networks, which in turn will spur job growth and ultimately lead to more affordable and accessible Internet access and other broadband services for consumers and businesses alike.

In the **Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Notice of Inquiry and Request for Comment** adopted today, the FCC seeks comment on reforms that will help accelerate deployment of next-generation networks and services by removing barriers to infrastructure investment at the federal, state, and local level.

**The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking would seek comment on the following:**

- Pole attachment reforms to make it easier for broadband providers to attach the wires necessary for next-generation networks, including:
  - Adopting a streamlined timeframe for gaining access to utility poles by using elements of municipal “one-touch, make-ready” rules
  - Reducing charges paid by attachers to utilities for work done to make a pole ready for new attachments
  - Ensuring that pole attachers are not charged multiple times for certain capital costs
  - Establishing a shot clock for Commission consideration of pole attachment complaints
  - Adopting a formula for computing the maximum pole attachment rate for incumbent local exchange carriers
  - Adopting rules that would allow for all local carriers (local exchange carriers, or LECs) to demand reciprocal access on other LEC-owned poles.

- Expediting the process for LECs to retire copper networks and provide notice of network changes by:
  - Streamlining copper retirement and reducing associated regulatory burdens to facilitate more rapid transition to IP networks
  - Streamlining and/or eliminating provisions of network change notification rules that may no longer be necessary
  - Eliminating rules requiring carriers to spend money to maintain outdated equipment
  - Streamlining the approval process for discontinuance of legacy services.

**The Notice of Inquiry** seeks comment on using the FCC's preemption authority to prospectively prohibit the enforcement of state and local laws that pose barriers to broadband deployment.

**The Request for Comment** seeks input on when carriers must obtain FCC permission to alter or discontinue a service.

Action by the Commission April 20, 2017 by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Notice of Inquiry, and Request for Comment (FCC 17-37). Chairman Pai, Commissioner O'Rielly approving. Commissioner Clyburn concurring. Chairman Pai, Commissioners Clyburn and O'Rielly issuing separate statements.

WC Docket No. 17-84

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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).*