

NECA's Weekly Federal Regulatory Summary

[USF Reform](#) [Open Internet](#) [Broadband](#) [Robocalls](#) [USF](#) [Call Completion](#) [Misc.](#) [Upcoming Events](#)

March 30, 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

- The FCC will consider nine items at its March 31, 2020 [Open Meeting](#), including an [NPRM](#) proposing to eliminate ex ante pricing regulation and require detariffing of various end-user charges associated with interstate access service, and a [report and order and FNPRM](#) that would require originating and terminating voice service providers to implement the STIR/SHAKEN caller ID authentication framework in the IP portions of their networks, and proposes additional measures to combat illegal spoofing.
- Chairman Pai [announced](#) a total of 580 broadband and telephone service providers have taken his [Keep Americans Connected Pledge](#), which calls on providers to promote connectivity for Americans impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.
- President Trump [signed](#) the "[Broadband DATA Act](#)," which requires the FCC to collect and disseminate granular broadband service availability data from wired, fixed-wireless, satellite, and mobile broadband providers. Trump also [signed](#) the [CARES Act](#), which, among other things, includes \$25 million for RUS's telemedicine and distance learning program; \$100 million for the USDA's ReConnect Program for rural broadband; and \$200 million for the FCC to support telehealth and telemedicine services.
- NTCA [discussed](#) the draft [NPRM](#) on detariffing of telephone access charges, suggesting instead of proposing mandatory detariffing of end-user TACs, the FCC seek comment on a permissive detariffing proposal specifically for RLECs. USTelecom [discussed](#) the draft [NPRM](#), the interplay between state and federal regulations as they relate to the truth-in-billing portion of the NPRM, and suggested adding questions to the NPRM. INCOMPAS [suggested](#) new rulemakings, including the detariffing NPRM, which have nothing to do with the pandemic have longer comment periods than is typically granted.
- USTelecom, AT&T, et al. [discussed](#) meeting performance testing obligations while USTelecom members respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- [Comments were filed](#) on the process of establishing auction application and competitive bidding procedures for Phase I of the RDOF. Replies are due April 10, 2020. [public notice](#)
- The Wireline Competition Bureau [granted](#) Inteliquent's [petition](#) for waiver, until June 1, 2020, of the access stimulation definition contained in Part 61, due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- The FCC released an [order and FNPRM](#) on establishing the registration of a single consortium that conducts private-led efforts to trace back the origin of suspected unlawful robocalls.
- The Wireless Telecommunications Bureau [granted](#) an extension of time to file comments, until April 7, 2020, on an Alaskan Plan population distribution methodology. Replies are due April 17, 2020.
- The WCB [granted](#) an extension of time to file comments on [refreshing](#) the Restoring Internet Freedom and Lifeline proceedings. Comments are due April 20, 2020; replies due May 20, 2020.
- [Replies were filed](#) on the [NPRM](#) on updating unbundling and resale rules to reflect the marketplace realities of intermodal voice and broadband competition.

Other Key Upcoming Dates

- Apr. 10 - Replies [due](#) on the process of establishing RDOF Phase I auction application and competitive bidding procedures.

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USF Reform

- Comments were filed on March 27, 2020, on the process of establishing pre-and post-auction application procedures and competitive bidding procedures for Phase I of the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. [WTA](#) urged the FCC to: use census block groups as the minimum geographic area for RDOF bidding; require RDOF applicants to employ a subscribership assumption of 100 percent to design and estimate the cost of their RDOF-supported networks; prohibit RDOF applicants from using unlicensed spectrum to construct their RDOF-supported networks; and, preclude RDOF applicants from selecting performance tiers and/or latency levels that their proposed technologies have not yet demonstrated the capability to provide. [NTCA](#) said the Commission should use census block groups as the standardized bidding unit in the RDOF auction. With respect to qualification of bidders, NTCA recommended the Commission: require more detail upfront from bidders with respect to their technical capabilities to perform; review whether providers that do not yet provide standalone voice services will be capable of doing so should they win; and designate upfront which spectrum bands and levels of bandwidth will be deemed capable of delivering services in specific performance tiers, among other things. [NRECA and UTC](#) suggested the FCC retain census block groups as the minimum bidding areas for Auction 904, and urged the Commission to clarify that areas obtaining ReConnect loans and those awarded grants for 25/3 Mbps services under state or other federal programs are eligible for Auction 904. [ADTRAN](#) urged the FCC to clarify that use of hybrid fiber/DSL technologies can qualify for the gigabit performance tier or the above baseline performance tier, regardless of whether the applicant has previously deployed that technology as reported on its Form 477s. Replies are due April 10, 2020. [all comments available. public notice](#)
- Chairman Pai sent a [letter](#) to Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.V.) on March 9, 2020, in response to his letter asking the FCC to postpone the initial RDOF auction until after the eligibility maps can be challenged and verified. Pai said delaying action would disadvantage those in rural America who do not have access to digital opportunity. Pai said Commission staff are working on implementing broadband maps under the Digital Opportunity Data Collection and will incorporate feedback from state, local, and Tribal governments, and from consumers. Pai also said the FCC allocated at least \$4.4 billion (plus any funds remaining in Phase I) for the RDOF Phase II auction, which will use the new broadband maps to target those areas located in partially served census blocks.
- Chairman Pai sent [letters](#) to Reps. Donald McEachin (D-Va.) and G.K. Butterfield (D-N.C.) on March 17, 2020, in response to their letter expressing concerns with the letter of credit requirements in the draft Rural Digital Opportunity Fund order. Pai said the FCC changed the LOC requirement to reduce costs to carriers by up to 80% in a given year from those initially proposed while still protecting scarce federal funds in the event of noncompliance.
- USTelecom, AT&T, CenturyLink, Frontier, Consolidated and Windstream [spoke with](#) Wireline Competition Bureau staff on March 20, 2020, to discuss meeting performance testing obligations while USTelecom members also respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. They said service providers attempting to install equipment in customer homes have found themselves unable to do so due to social distancing and quarantine measures, and technicians who would be doing testing are now working on responding to customer needs and maintaining critical network operations. They suggested the FCC permit providers to select additional randomly selected test locations rather than attempting to replace incompatible modems during the current emergency, among other things.
- The Wireless Telecommunications Bureau issued a [public notice](#) on March 26, 2020, extending the comment due dates on the [public notice](#) on a population distribution methodology for estimating the number of Alaskans who receive mobile service within census blocks in remote areas. The Alaska Telecom Association had filed a [motion](#) requesting a 60-day extension to file comments, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Comments are now due April 7, 2020; reply comments are due April 17, 2020.

[Back to Highlights](#)

ICC

- The Wireline Competition Bureau issued an [order](#) on March 27, 2020, granting Onvoy, d/b/a Inteliquent's [petition](#) for a temporary waiver, until June 1, 2020, of the access stimulation definition contained in Part 61. Inteliquent said a waiver will allow it to continue to support a surge in demand for conference calling services during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Bureau limited this waiver to traffic originated and terminated by Inteliquent for its preexisting customers- those entities that were Inteliquent customers when it filed the petition on March 17, 2020. The Bureau declined to extend the waiver to all conferencing traffic, stating there is no reason to believe all LECs that provide service to conference calling platforms are similarly situated to Inteliquent. [news release](#)
- AT&T filed an [opposition](#) on March 27, 2020, to Native American Telecom's [petition](#) seeking a waiver of the access stimulation definition. AT&T asserted the petition is without merit and claimed NAT has long engaged in anti-consumer access arbitrage stimulation schemes and that AT&T's recent records suggest they continue to do so.
- AT&T filed [comments](#) on March 27, 2020, on Peerless Networks' [petition](#) for waiver of the access stimulation definition. AT&T took no position on the merits of the petition, but suggested the Commission make clear all traffic measurements calculated before the onset of the pandemic crisis are valid and if carriers' traffic previously exceeded the 6:1 ratio set out in the Commission's rules, they are an access stimulator under the rules.
- Peerless Network filed a [petition](#) on March 24, 2020, for a temporary waiver of the FCC's access stimulation traffic-ratio rules in sections 61.3(bbb)(1)(i)(B) and 61.3(bbb)(1)(ii), through June 1, 2020, in light of the surge of traffic resulting from the work-from home directives relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. Peerless said its request seeks to allow it to serve the needs of American consumers and businesses without the risk of a potential financial penalty or inappropriate access stimulator label.
- AT&T and Verizon filed a [letter](#) on March 26, 2020, claiming CarrierX (Free Conferencing) and Wide Voice are re-routing hundreds of millions of "free" conferencing traffic to telephone numbers assigned to HD Carrier- a VoIP provider also under common control with Free Conferencing and Wide Voice. AT&T and Verizon asserted the access arbitrage order and prior Commission precedent governing LECs that serve as interconnected VoIP providers' connection to and from the PSTN make clear that re-routing access stimulating traffic through a VoIP provider does not render that traffic irrelevant for purposes of the Commission's access stimulation tests.
- Wide Voice filed a [letter](#) on March 26, 2020, claiming the FCC has failed to address intentional call blocking. It asserted since issuing the access arbitrage [order](#), the FCC has failed to respond to questions for clarification and that large carriers are making unsubstantiated allegations about traffic pumping and lobbying for new rules. Wide Voice said as it is seeing increased demands on its network, the order never considers the implications of such a crisis like the coronavirus pandemic and shift in consumer behaviors.

[Back to Highlights](#)

Broadband

- President Trump [signed](#) the [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security \(CARES\) Act](#) on March 27, 2020, which among other things, includes \$25 million for RUS's telemedicine and distance learning program; \$100 million for the USDA's ReConnect Program for rural broadband deployment; and \$200 million for the FCC to support telehealth and telemedicine services.
- Chairman Pai [announced](#) on March 25, 2020, 190 more broadband and telephone service providers have taken his [Keep Americans Connected Pledge](#), which calls on broadband and telephone service

providers to promote connectivity for Americans impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. A total of 580 companies have now taken the pledge.

- Chairman Pai wrote a [blog post](#) on March 24, 2020, on the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted over [500 broadband providers](#) have signed the Keep Americans Connected Pledge, and have committed: no residential or small business subscribers will have their service terminated over the next 60 days because of an inability to pay their bills; any late fees incurred by residential or small business customers because of their economic circumstances will be waived during this period; and Wi-Fi hotspots will be opened up to any American who needs them. Pai also said the FCC has cut regulatory red tape and free up resources to enable access to communications for those impacted by COVID-19, including making an [additional \\$42 million](#) immediately available through the Rural Health Care Program, and temporarily waived certain [requirements from its Lifeline program](#).
- President Trump [signed](#) the “[Broadband DATA Act](#)” on March 24, 2020, which requires the FCC to collect and disseminate granular broadband service availability data from wired, fixed-wireless, satellite, and mobile broadband providers. Trump also signed the “[Secure 5G and Beyond Act of 2020](#),” which requires the President to develop a strategy to ensure the security of next generation mobile telecommunications systems and infrastructure in the United States, and assist allies and strategic partners in maximizing the security of next generation mobile telecommunications systems and infrastructure. Chairman Pai issued a [statement](#) on the Broadband Data Act bill.
- Sens. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.), et al. [introduced](#) the “Keeping Critical Connections Act” on March 24, 2020, to help small broadband providers ensure rural broadband connectivity for students and their families during the coronavirus pandemic. The bill would appropriate \$2 billion for a fund at the FCC under which small broadband providers with fewer than 250,000 customers could be compensated for broadband services- if they provided free or discounted broadband services or upgrades- during the pandemic for low-income families who could not afford to pay their bills or provided distance learning capability for students.
- The “[Take Responsibility for Workers and Families Act](#)” was introduced in the House on March 23, 2020, which proposes emergency appropriations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Among other things, the bill provides: \$2 billion for an FCC “Emergency Connectivity Fund” for the provision of Wi-Fi hotspots and connected devices to schools and libraries; \$1 billion for an FCC “Emergency Broadband Connectivity Fund” for the provision of Lifeline broadband; \$285 million for the USDA’s ReConnect program; and \$25 million for the RUS’s distance learning, telemedicine and broadband program. It also provides \$200 million for the FCC to provide to health care providers telecommunications services, information services, and devices necessary to enable the provision of telehealth services.
- Chairman Pai sent a [letter](#) to Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.V.) on March 9, 2020, in response to his letters on the availability of high-speed broadband service in West Virginia. Pai said knowing whether broadband providers have met their commitments to deploy high-speed broadband service is critical, and noted it requires universal service funding recipients to report the specific locations where they offer high-speed broadband through USAC’s HUBB portal, among other things. Pai also said in 2018, the Commission awarded nearly \$12 million in CAF II support to bring broadband to 7,962 locations in West Virginia, and estimated up to 130,000 locations could be eligible to benefit from Phase I of the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund.
- Responses were filed by [CostQuest](#), the [National States Geographic Information Council](#) and [Connect Nation](#) on March 26, 2020, to USAC’s [request for information](#) on how broadband-addressable location data can be generated, collected, and shared with the public. USAC [indicated](#) due to provisions in the Broadband DATA Act, which was signed into law on March 23, 2020, responses to the RFI should no longer be submitted to USAC, and USAC is withdrawing this RFI.
- Microsoft filed a [letter](#) on March 25, 2020, on possible FCC actions that could be taken in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Microsoft suggested the FCC should: grant an E-Rate [petition](#) clarifying that schools can wirelessly extend E-Rate subsidized connections to students at home; alleviate burdens, provide additional flexibility, and accelerate deployments by CAF II recipients; finalize the Connected Care Pilot Program and enable eligible health care providers to extend telehealth services to patients

lacking broadband access and broadband-capable devices at home; and move forward with proposed changes to technical rules for TV white space devices.

- The FCC issued a [public notice](#) on March 24, 2020, announcing a change in starting time for the next meeting of the Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee, which now be held March 27, 2020, beginning at 11:00 a.m., via conference call and available to the public via the Internet at <http://www.fcc.gov/live>. At this [meeting](#), the BDAC will review a report and recommendations from its Disaster Response and Recovery working group and will hear reports from the Increasing Broadband Investment in Low-Income Communities and Broadband Infrastructure Deployment Job Skills and Training Opportunities working groups.
- The FCC filed a [brief](#) with the Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit on March 25, 2020, in the case addressing petitions for review filed by [INCOMPAS](#) and the [California PUC](#) of the August 2019 [memorandum opinion and order](#) that granted two requests in USTelecom's [petition for forbearance](#) from UNE analog loop and avoided-cost resale obligations for price cap ILECs.
- ACA Connects [spoke with](#) Wireline Competition Bureau staff on March 24, 2020, to request that the FCC affirm common industry practice by ruling that customer drop pole attachments can be performed without providing advance notice to investor-owned utilities. It asserted this action would provide greater clarity for attachers and utilities and is an immediate step the Commission can take to help new broadband customers get online rapidly during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Florida Power & Light Company and Gulf Power Company [met with](#) Chairman Pai's advisor on March 18, 2020, to urge the Commission to deny CTIA's [petition for declaratory ruling](#). They said if the Commission is not inclined to do so, then at a minimum, the Commission should initiate a formal rulemaking, and develop a complete record on the important issues that the petition presents.

Robocalls

- The FCC released a [report and order and FNPRM](#) on March 27, 2020, amending its rules to establish the registration of a single consortium that conducts private-led efforts to trace back the origin of suspected unlawful robocalls, pursuant to the TRACED Act. The accompanying FNPRM seeks comment on what rules, if any, the FCC needs to guide that process and the obligations it should impose on such providers to end those practices. Comments are due 30 days after publication in the Federal Register; replies are due 45 days after publication.
- The FCC issued a [public notice](#) on March 25, 2020, announcing the formation of a new federal advisory committee, the Hospital Robocall Protection Group, pursuant to the TRACED Act. The TRACED Act requires the Commission to establish the Group, for the purpose of issuing best practices on how: voice service providers can better combat unlawful robocalls made to hospitals; hospitals can better protect themselves from such calls, including by using unlawful robocall mitigation techniques; and the Federal Government and State governments can help combat such calls. Nominations for membership to the group are due May 1, 2020. [news release](#)
- Sens. John Thune (R-S.D.) and Edward Markey (D-Mass.) sent a [letter](#) to the FCC and the Department of Justice on March 23, 2020, to encourage both agencies to take necessary steps to protect the public from illegal robocalls during the coronavirus health emergency. They asserted an estimated one million suspicious calls have been placed pertaining to coronavirus, many of which relay deceptive promises of non-existent testing services. They also said the [TRACED Act](#) gives both the FCC and DOJ critical new robocall deterrent and enforcement powers. [press release](#)
- The Federal Trade Commission sent [letters](#) to 19 VoIP providers on March 27, 2020, to warn them that assisting and facilitating illegal telemarketing or robocalling is against the law. The FTC said it may take legal action against them if they assist a seller or telemarketer who they know, or consciously avoid knowing, is violating the agency's telemarketing sales rule. [press release](#).

- The U.S. Department of Justice [announced](#) on March 27, 2020, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York issued orders in two separate civil actions, barring eight individuals and entities from continuing to facilitate the transmission of massive volumes of fraudulent robocalls to consumers.
- NTCA [spoke with](#) Chairman Pai's advisor and Wireline Competition Bureau staff on March 20, 2020, to discuss the draft [report and order and FNPRM](#) on STIR/SHAKEN, which will be considered at the FCC March 31, 2020 Open Meeting. NTCA offered proposed changes to the draft item and expressed concern with the provisions of the draft order that would require a carrier to authenticate a call that it originates and exclusively transits its own network. NTCA stated its understanding that such authentication was not specifically contemplated in the STIR/SHAKEN standard and that doing so would add significant additional cost for some providers.
- USTelecom, AT&T, CenturyLink, Frontier, and Verizon [spoke with](#) advisors to Chairman Pai's and Commissioner Rosenworcel, and Wireline Competition Bureau and Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau staff on March 19 and 20, 2020, to offer suggestions on the draft [report and order and FNPRM](#) on STIR/SHAKEN. USTelecom, AT&T, CenturyLink, Frontier and Verizon also [spoke with](#) legal advisors to Commissioners O'Rielly, Starks and Carr on March 23, 2020, to offer suggestions on the draft [report and order and FNPRM](#) on STIR/SHAKEN.
- CenturyLink [spoke with](#) advisors to Chairman Pai and Commissioners O'Rielly, Starks and Carr, and Wireline Competition Bureau staff on March 24, 2020, to review its costs associated with its continuing deployment of the STIR/SHAKEN call authentication framework on its IP networks. CenturyLink asked the Commission to revise paragraph 53 of the draft [order](#) to more accurately reflect the magnitude of costs that the industry will have incurred, especially larger voice service providers such as CenturyLink.
- TransNexus, Wabash Communications, New Lisbon Telephone and Sandhill Telephone Coop [met with](#) legal advisors to Chairman Pai, Commissioners O'Rielly and Starks and Wireline Competition Bureau staff on March 19, 20 and 24, 2020, to discuss obstacles to deployment of STIR/SHAKEN call authentication by telephone voice service providers and explain how these obstacles can be overcome using Out-of-Band STIR/SHAKEN. They also responded to USTelecom's [ex parte](#) on implementation of STIR/SHAKEN. TransNexus also filed a [letter](#) on March 23, 2020, on similar issues.
- CTIA filed a [letter](#) on March 20, 2020, on the draft [report and order and FNPRM](#) on STIR/SHAKEN. CTIA expressed support for mandating STIR/SHAKEN, and establishing a private-led consortium to further industry efforts to traceback illegal robocalls to the source. It also said the Commission should adopt a broad safe harbor as proposed by CTIA, USTelecom, and NCTA, claiming it will help enable voice service providers to more aggressively help fight robocalls, while protecting legitimate calls.
- Transaction Network Services [spoke with](#) legal advisors to Chairman Pai and Commissioners O'Rielly, Carr and Starks on March 19, 2020, to discuss its robocall mitigation services. TNS expressed support for the deployment of STIR/SHAKEN, as broadly and as quickly as possible. TNS also [spoke with](#) Commissioner Rosenworcel's legal advisor on March 20, 2020, to offer suggestions on the draft [report and order and FNPRM](#) on STIR/SHAKEN.
- The Americans Bankers Association, et al. [spoke with](#) legal advisors to Chairman Pai and Commissioner O'Rielly and Wireline Competition Bureau staff on March 23, 2020, to discuss the draft [report and order and FNPRM](#), which implements provisions of the TRACED Act. They asked the Commission to revise the draft order to require voice service providers not to block unsigned calls until the SHAKEN/STIR framework has been fully implemented, and that the Commission seek further comment on the display of SHAKEN/STIR information to called parties.
- Metaswitch [spoke with](#) Wireline Competition Bureau staff on March 23, 2020, to discuss the draft [report and order and FNPRM](#) on STIR/SHAKEN. It asserted applying the requirement to sign and verify all calls on an individual carrier's network is unnecessary and by contrast, an approach of signing and verifying intercarrier calls as they leave and enter the controlled carrier network is much less disruptive and much more readily deliverable by the deadline.

[Back to Highlights](#)

Open Internet

- The Wireline Competition Bureau released an [order](#) on March 25, 2020, granting a 21-day extension of time for filing comments and reply comments on the [public notice](#) seeking to refresh the record in the Restoring Internet Freedom and Lifeline proceedings. Comments are now due April 20, 2020; and reply comments are due May 20, 2020. Commissioners [Rosenworcel](#) and [Starks](#) issued statements.
- NASUCA filed a [letter](#) on March 23, 2020, to express support for the [motion](#) filed by the Benton Institute for Broadband and Society, et al., seeking a 30- day extension to file comments and replies on the [public notice](#) seeking to refresh the record on restoring internet freedom and Lifeline.

Universal Service

- The Wireline Competition Bureau issued a [public notice](#) on March 23, 2020, to remind schools and libraries that are closed due to the coronavirus outbreak that they are permitted to allow the general public to use E-Rate-supported Wi-Fi networks while on the school's campus or library property.
- Commissioner Carr issued a [statement](#) on March 23, 2020, praising ISP's for creating or expanding over the last week access plans tailored to keeping students and others in low-income households online and connected during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Wireline Competition Bureau issued an [order](#) on March 26, 2020, granting additional relief to assist rural health care program participants in addressing the ongoing public health emergency. The Bureau extended the RHC Program application filing window until June 30, 2020, eased competitive bidding requirements for health care providers with expiring evergreen contracts, and provided an extension of several procedural deadlines.
- Chairman Pai issued a [statement](#) on March 26, 2020, after the Senate passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security [Act](#), which includes \$200 million for the agency to support telehealth and telemedicine services.
- The [public notice](#) announcing [SECA](#) and [Infinity Communications and Consulting](#) filed petitions for reconsideration of the E-Rate Category 2 [report and order](#) was published in the [Federal Register](#) on March 24, 2020. Oppositions are due April 8, 2020; replies are due April 20, 2020.
- Chairman Pai sent a [letter](#) to Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) on March 20, 2020, to respond to her letter that asked the FCC to waive or adopt temporary rules to allow rural and non-rural health care providers to apply for support for advanced telecommunications and information services for telemedicine during the pandemic. Pai said broadband and telephone service providers have taken the "Keep Americans Connected Pledge" and he has asked broadband providers to improve their low-income broadband programs, relax data caps where appropriate, and enhance remote learning and telehealth opportunities.
- Reps. Anna Eshoo (D-Calif.) and Mike Doyle (D-Penn.) sent a [letter](#) to Chairman Pai on March 21, 2020, to urge the FCC to loosen the restrictions of the rural health care program to expand eligibility to all healthcare facilities nationwide as expeditiously as possible.
- The Wireline Competition Bureau issued a [public notice](#) on March 23, 2020, to make available for public inspection a draft copy of [Form 5634](#) and the form's [instructions](#) for the Stage 2 competitive proposal process of the Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund and the Connect USVI Fund. The Bureau said it is seeking Paperwork Reduction Act approval for the form and instructions, and asked that any comments be submitted as directed by the Federal Register [notice](#).

- Smith Bagley, Inc. filed a [letter](#) on March 24, 2020, to request the FCC take action to ensure low-income populations, including those on Tribal lands, have continued connectivity and sufficient broadband capacity to meet critical needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. It suggested the FCC: make additional support available on a temporary basis for purchase of broadband-capable devices and for additional data needed to access distance learning and other critical services; temporarily suspend the rule requiring notification and de-enrollment for non-usage of no-charge Lifeline service; and temporarily suspend the one-per-household requirement.
- TruConnect filed an amended [petition](#) on March 24, 2020, replacing its previously-filed [petition](#) seeking ETC designation in Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and Maine. It amended petition removed New York, updated its list of ETC designations, provided updates for current minimum service standards, and provided updates for compliance with the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier.
- TruConnect sent a [letter](#) to Chairman Pai on March 25, 2020, to ask the FCC to act on pending petitions that will provide a choice of providers to low-income consumers in states where the FCC is the regulator with authority to grant ETC status. It asserted that currently, in many of the states, low-income consumers have no competitive options for mobile wireless Lifeline service.
- The National Lifeline Association [spoke with](#) Wireline Competition Bureau staff on March 13, 2020, to discuss potential responses by Lifeline service providers and the Commission to assist low-income Americans with voice and broadband communications during the COVID-19 pandemic. It recommended relief from the Lifeline recertification, reverification and non-usage de-enrollment requirements to avoid disconnecting low-income Americans from critical communications during this time.
- Free Press [spoke with](#) Commissioner Starks' advisor on March 24, 2020, to discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Lifeline subscribers. It expressed concern with an applicant's ability to obtain devices and service as various states implement shelter-in-place orders. It suggested the Commission waive or modify many of the Lifeline eligibility requirements or provide expedited procedures as found in other federal government benefit programs.
- The National League of Cities, et al., sent a [letter](#) to Chairman Pai on March 20, 2020, to request additional assistance and cooperation from the FCC as their communities respond to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. They asked the FCC to expand access to Lifeline and telehealth, leverage the E-Rate program to reach households and encourage additional action from partner ISPs.
- Public and private entities sent a [letter](#) to Chairman Pai and Commissioners O'Rielly, Rosenworcel, Carr and Starks on March 23, 2020, to ask the FCC to take additional action to adapt the Lifeline program to meet the COVID-19 crisis, including prohibiting disconnection of Lifeline customers, requiring unlimited voice minutes, text and commensurate voice-only support, and the creation of an emergency Lifeline broadband benefit.
- Common Sense sent a [letter](#) to Chairman Pai and Commissioners O'Rielly, Rosenworcel, Carr and Starks on March 24, 2020, to provide suggestions on maintaining broadband connectivity. It suggested the Commission ensure Lifeline customers are not disconnected, expand and streamline eligibility and verification, require voice service to include unlimited minutes and text, and create an emergency broadband benefit within the program. It also suggested the Commission clarify schools and libraries do not endanger their E-Rate funding if they choose to leave their Wi-Fi network open to students, public or to be used as backhaul and allow E-Rate funded schools to expand capacity to address their new remote learning needs.
- Siyeh Communications and 3 Rivers Telephone Cooperative filed a [petition](#) on March 24, 2020, seeking a study area waiver on the transfer of the Browning, Montana exchange from 3 Rivers to SiyCom. SiyCom also filed a [petition](#) seeking ETC designation in the Browning, Montana exchange, which is located almost entirely on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana and provided an order from

the Montana Public Service Commission stating SiyCom is not subject to its jurisdiction and that it does not object to having the FCC consider SiyCom's ETC petition for the Browning exchange.

[Back to Highlights](#)

Misc.

- The FCC issued the [agenda](#) on March 24, 2020, for its March 31, 2020 Open Meeting. It said due to the current COVID-19 pandemic and related agency telework and headquarters access policies, this meeting will be in electronic format and will be open to the public on the Internet via live feed from the FCC's web page at www.fcc.gov/live and on the FCC's YouTube channel. The FCC said the agenda items are expected to be voted on circulation prior to the meeting. The FCC will consider: an [NPRM](#) that would propose to eliminate ex ante pricing regulation and require detariffing of various end-user charges associated with interstate access service, and prohibit carriers from separately listing these charges on customers' telephone bills. The FCC will also consider: a [report and order and FNPRM](#) that would adopt rules requiring originating and terminating voice service providers to implement the STIR/SHAKEN caller ID authentication framework in the IP portions of their networks, and propose additional measures to combat illegal spoofing, including measures to implement portions of the TRACED Act; an [NPRM](#) that would seek comment on whether to modify the Commission's rules governing the use of distributed transmission systems by broadcast television stations; an [NPRM](#) that would seek comment on whether to update the methodology for determining whether a television broadcast station is "significantly viewed" in a community outside of its local market; an [FNPRM and NPRM](#) that would seek comment on whether to modify the Commission's rules governing the resolution of program carriage disputes between video programming vendors and multichannel video programming distributors; and four personnel actions.
- NTCA [spoke with](#) Chairman Pai's advisor on March 20, 2020, to discuss the draft [NPRM](#) on detariffing of telephone access charges, which will be considered at the FCC's March 31, 2020 Open Meeting. NTCA said instead of proposing mandatory detariffing of end-user TACs, the FCC should seek comment on a permissive detariffing proposal specifically for RLECs. NTCA recommended the Commission inquire whether and to what degree such a framework would make more sense for RLECs, given the respective implications of mandatory or permissive detariffing regimes on RLEC consumers and the regulatory and cost recovery mechanisms that otherwise apply to their operations.
- USTelecom [spoke with](#) Chairman Pai's advisor, and Wireline Competition Bureau staff on March 19, 2020, to discuss the draft [NPRM](#) on detariffing of telephone access charges. USTelecom discussed the interplay between state and federal regulations as they relate to the truth-in-billing portion of the draft NPRM, and suggested that adding some questions to the draft NPRM may develop a better record on how to account for the detariffed interstate portion of the bill.
- INCOMPAS [spoke with](#) advisors to Chairman Pai and Commissioners Rosenworcel and Starks on March 19 and 20, 2020, to suggest that new rulemakings that have nothing to do with the coronavirus pandemic be considered for much longer comment periods than is typically granted. INCOMPAS expressed concern about obtaining the information that will be required to respond to the proposals in the draft [NPRM](#) on detariffing of telephone access charges. INCOMPAS urged the FCC to consider a 90/30 day comment/reply period instead of the proposed 30/15 period.
- In addition to reply comments that were listed in a previous edition of *REGScan*, replies were filed on March 20, 2020, on the [NPRM](#) on updating its unbundling and resale rules to reflect the marketplace realities of intermodal voice and broadband competition. [Verizon](#) asserted the unbundling rules have outlived their purpose and threaten to do more harm than good to competition, and claimed the record supports the FCC's proposal to remove unbundling for DS1 and DS3 loops in counties and study areas deemed competitive in the BDS Order. [Windstream](#) said the Commission should not adopt the proposal in the NPRM to change the standard for access to unbundled interoffice dark fiber and should not extend its grant of forbearance from unbundling obligation to interoffice dark fiber. [NASUCA](#) asserted the evidence shows if the Commission proceeds with the proposals described in the NPRM, the ability of CLECs serving customers throughout the country will be impaired. It said prior to

eliminating these UNES the Commission must also consider the impact on public safety. [all replies available](#).

- The Rural Wireless Association filed a [request](#) on March 24, 2020, seeking an extension of time for certain ETCs to report supply chain security information pursuant to the February 2020 [public notice](#) announcing the opening of the [reporting portal](#). RWA asserted due to the coronavirus pandemic, and the need for clarification from the Bureaus with respect to certain information it is requesting, ETCs be afforded an additional eight weeks, until June 22, 2020, to respond to the data collection.
- ZTE filed [comments](#) on March 27, 2020, on the applicability of the recent [Secure and Trusted Communications Act of 2019](#) to the designation proceedings involving Huawei Technologies and ZTE Corporation. ZTE said the FCC should ensure its rules and processes are consistent with Congressional directives set forth in the act, and that it is committed to compliance with US laws and global cybersecurity best practices. [public notice](#)
- No comments were filed on [CenturyLink's](#) application for authorization to obtain NANP telephone numbers directly from the numbering administrators for its iVoIP service.
- No comments were filed on [Quality Voice and Data's](#) application for authorization to obtain NANP telephone numbers directly from the numbering administrators for its iVoIP service.

[Back to Highlights](#)

Upcoming Filing Dates

- Apr. 1 - Northern Valley's direct case due regarding the lawfulness of [tariff its revisions](#). Oppositions to direct case are due April 15, 2020. [order](#)
- Apr. 3 - Comments due on applications for review of decisions on the rural health care program filed by the [Tanana Chiefs Conference](#) and [ENA Healthcare Services](#). Replies are due April 20, 2020. [public notices](#)
- Apr. 3 - Comments due on the state of competition in the communications marketplace for its second communications marketplace report. Replies are due May 13, 2020. [public notice](#)
- Apr. 6 - PRA comments due on a revision of a currently approved information collection on FCC Form 183, the application to participate in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction. [notice](#)
- Apr. 7 - Comments due on a population distribution methodology for estimating the number of Alaskans who receive mobile service within census blocks in remote areas. Replies due April 17, 2020. [public notice](#), [public notice](#)
- Apr. 8 - Oppositions due to [SECA's](#) and [Infinity Communications and Consulting's](#) petitions for reconsideration of the E-Rate Category Two [report and order](#). Replies are due April 20, 2020. [public notice](#), [FR](#)
- Apr. 10 - Replies due on the process of establishing pre-and post-auction application procedures and competitive bidding procedures for Phase I of the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. [public notice](#)
- Apr. 10 - Challenges due on the preliminary list of census blocks that have been deemed initially eligible for the RDOF Phase I auction. [public notice](#)
- Apr. 10 - PRA comments on an extension of a currently approved information collection associated with the prevention of the unauthorized change by telecommunications carriers of consumers' selections of telecommunications service providers. [notice](#)

- Apr. 13 - Comments due on the CAF II Coalition's [petition](#) for rulemaking and [petition](#) for waiver regarding the letter of credit requirements for recipients of CAF Phase II support. Reply comments are due April 28, 2020. [public notice](#)
- Apr. 13 - Comments due on two petitions seeking study area waivers filed by West River Telecommunications Cooperative. Reply comments are due April 28, 2020. [public notice](#)
- Apr. 13 - Comments due on the outcomes of the auction of toll free numbers in the 833 area code, lessons learned, and future recommendations for toll free number assignment methodologies. [public notice](#)
- Apr. 13 - Comments due on Skybeam's [request](#) for expedited waiver that the Commission waive the letter of credit rules for rural broadband experiments support recipients, and instead allow Skybeam to comply with the recently adopted RDOF letter of credit provisions of section 54.804(c). Reply comments are due April 28, 2020. [public notice](#)
- Apr. 14 - PRA comments due on an extension of a currently approved information collection relating to the monitoring of USF support mechanisms. PRA comments are due April 14, 2020. [FCC notice](#)
- Apr. 15 - Oppositions due to Northern Valley's direct case due regarding the lawfulness of [tariff its revisions](#). [order](#)
- Apr. 16 - Comments due on the re-establishment of a computer matching program the FCC and USAC will conduct with agencies from the states of Colorado, Mississippi, New Mexico and Utah to verify the eligibility of applicants to and subscribers of the Lifeline program. [notice](#)
- Apr. 17 - Replies due on a population distribution methodology for estimating the number of Alaskans who receive mobile service within census blocks in remote areas. [public notice](#), [public notice](#)
- Apr. 20 - Replies due to oppositions to [SECA's](#) and [Infinity Communications and Consulting's](#) petitions for reconsideration of the E-Rate Category Two [report and order](#). [public notice](#), [FR](#)
- Apr. 20 - PRA comments due on a new information collection as a result of the December 12, 2018 [order](#) on robocalls, which established a database to enable callers to verify whether a telephone number has been disconnected before calling that number. [notice](#)
- Apr. 20 - PRA comments due on a revision to a currently approved information collection associated with FCC Forms 481, 497, 555, 5629, 5630 and 5631, as a result of the November 2019 Lifeline [order](#). [FR](#)
- Apr. 20 - Responses due on assessing parties' continuing interests in [petitions for reconsideration](#) of various aspects of the intercarrier compensation provisions of the 2011 USF/ICC Transformation Order. [Federal Register](#), [public notice](#)
- Apr. 20 - Replies due on applications for review of decisions on the rural health care program filed by the [Tanana Chiefs Conference](#) and [ENA Healthcare Services](#). [public notices](#)
- Apr. 20 - Comments due on refreshing the record in the Restoring Internet Freedom and Lifeline proceedings. The Bureau seeks comment on how changes adopted in the RIF [order](#) might affect: public safety; the regulation of pole attachments in states subject to federal regulation; and the Lifeline program. Replies due May 20, 2020. [public notice](#), [order](#)
- Apr. 22 - Deadline for ETCs to report on the extent to which their networks contain or use potentially prohibited equipment or services provided by Huawei or ZTE and the costs associated with removing such equipment and replacing it with equivalent equipment. [public notice](#)

- Apr. 28 - Replies due on the CAF II Coalition's [petition](#) for rulemaking and [petition](#) for waiver regarding the letter of credit requirements for recipients of CAF Phase II support. [public notice](#)
- Apr. 28 - Replies due on Skybeam's [request](#) for expedited waiver that the Commission waive the letter of credit rules for rural broadband experiments support recipients, and instead allow Skybeam to comply with the recently adopted RDOF letter of credit provisions of section 54.804(c). [public notice](#)
- Apr. 28 - Replies due on two petitions seeking study area waivers filed by West River Telecommunications Cooperative. [public notice](#)
- May 4 - PRA comments due on a revision of a currently approved information collection associated with rate-of-return carrier universal service reporting requirements filed on FCC Forms 507, 508 and 509. [FR](#)
- May 4 - PRA comments due on a revision of a currently approved information collection associated with high-cost universal service support filed on FCC Form 481. [FR](#)
- May 4 - PRA comments due on an extension of a currently approved information collection on IXC information disclosure requirements, internet posting requirements, recordkeeping requirements, and annual certification requirements. [notice](#)
- May 11 - PRA comments on a new FCC Form 5634, application for the Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund and the Connect USVI Fund Stage 2 Fixed Support. [notice](#)
- May 11 - PRA comments on an extension of a currently approved information collection associated with numbering audits. [notice](#)
- May 13 - Replies due on the state of competition in the communications marketplace for its second communications marketplace report. [public notice](#)
- May 19 - PRA comments due on an extension of a currently approved information collection associated with certain Part 54 ETC designation requirements. [FR](#)
- May 19 - PRA comments due on an extension of a currently approved information collection associated with supply chains. [FR](#)
- May 19 - PRA comments due on an extension of a currently approved information collection associated with price cap pricing flexibility. [FR](#)
- May 20 - Replies due on refreshing the record in the Restoring Internet Freedom and Lifeline proceedings. The Bureau seeks comment on how changes adopted in the RIF [order](#) might affect: public safety; the regulation of pole attachments in states subject to federal regulation; and the Lifeline program. [public notice](#), [order](#)

[Back to Highlights](#)

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