UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
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MEETING
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FRIDAY
SEPTEMBER 25, 2020
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The Advisory Committee met via Video Teleconference, at
10:30 a.m. EDT, Steve Pociask, Chairman, presiding.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:
AJIT PAI, Chairman
BRENDAN CARR, Commissioner

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:
STEVE POCIASK, Committee Chairman
ZAINAB ALKEBSI, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer Advocacy
Network
WILLIAM BENDETSON, Massachusetts Department of
Telecommunications & Cable
DEBRA R. BERLYN, National Consumers League
SAM BRINTON, The Trevor Project
BARBARA BURTON, National Association of State Utility
Consumer Advocates
JOSLYN DAY, Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications
& Cable
MARK DEFALCO, Appalachian Regional Commission
B. LYNN FOLLANSBEE, USTelecom
CORALETTE HANNON, AARP
JONATHON HAUENSCHILD, American Legislative Exchange Council
KYLE J. HILDEBRAND, serving individually as a subject-
matter expert, Special Government Employee
BRIAN HURLEY, America's Communications Association - ACA
Connects
THADDEUS JOHNSON, National Association of State Utility
Consumer Advocates
DAWIT KAHSAI, AARP
JOHNNY KAMPIS, serving individually as a subject-matter
expert, Special Government Employee

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ERIC KOCH, serving individually as a subject-matter expert,
              Special Government Employee
       IRENE LEECH, Consumer Federation of America
                   SARAH LEGGIN, CTIA
              VONDA LONG-DILLARD, AT&T
         KATIE MCAULIFFE, Americans for Tax Reform
      STEVEN MORRIS, NCTA - The Internet and Television
                       Association
        RACHEL NEMETH, Consumer Technology Association
    MICHAEL SANTORELLI, serving individually as a subject-
          matter expert, Special Government Employee
            BARRY UMANSKY, Digital Policy Institute
      LARRY WALKE, National Association of Broadcasters
         OLIVIA WEIN, National Consumer Law Center
              BOHDAN ZACHARY, Milwaukee PBS

                   COMMISSION STAFF:
         SCOTT MARSHALL, Designated Federal Official
  GREGORY V. HALEDJIAN, Deputy Designated Federal Official
                   EDUARD BARTHOLME
                   JERUSHA BURNETT
                   DIANE BURSTEIN
                    DONNA CYRUS
                   JESSE GOODWIN
                 AUDRA HALE-MADDOX
                 CATHERINE LANGSTON
                    SUSAN MORT
                    MIKA SAVIR
                  DAVID SIERADZKI
                  SUZY SINGLETON
                  HAYLEY STEFFEN
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Introduction and Agenda

Scott Marshall, Designated Federal Officer, Consumer Advisory Committee, and Steve Pociask, Chairman, Consumer Advisory Committee

Steve Pociask, Chairman of the Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC), called the meeting to order at 10:32 am. Today's meeting will be the last meeting of the CAC's 10th charter. Chair Pociask thanked CAC members, staff, presenters, and members of the public for their attendance and gave an overview of the meeting's agenda.

Roll Call

Steve Pociask, Chairman, Consumer Advisory Committee, and Debra Berlyn, Vice-Chairman, Consumer

Advisory Committee
Chair Pociask called roll and determined that a quorum was present.

Welcome and Overview
Ajit Pai, Chairman, FCC
Chairman Pai thanked members for their service on the CAC and thanked Steve Pociask and Debra Berlyn for their thoughtful and inclusive style of leadership. They and the CAC at large have made valuable contributions to the FCC's decision-making. Chairman Pai thanked the working group chairs for their leadership efforts and thanked FCC staff for working with the CAC, particularly staff in the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau (CGB). He particularly thanked Scott Marshall, the CAC DFO, and Greg Haledjian, the Deputy DFO.

Since his time as FCC Chairman, fighting illegal robocalls has been the FCC's top consumer protection priority. Illegal robocalls have consistently been the FCC's top category of consumer complaints. The CAC has consistently partnered with the FCC to find practical solutions to assist consumers in combating illegal robocalls. At its September 30th meeting, the FCC will consider an order that takes the next steps towards STIR/SHAKEN implementation. The order would establish rules governing intermediate providers and caller ID authentication in non-Internet Protocol (IP) networks, and would require voice service providers (VSPs) to either upgrade non-IP networks to IP and implement STIR/SHAKEN or work to develop a non-IP authentication solution. The order would enact pro-consumer provisions of the Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence (TRACED) Act.

Chairman Pai reviewed actions the CAC has taken during its 10th charter. In September 2019, the CAC adopted a recommendation addressing how best to educate consumers about the types of robocalls that may be blocked and possible mechanisms that voice providers would use to notify consumers that particular calls had been blocked. In December 2019, the CAC adopted a recommendation regarding how best to educate consumers about the meaning of the STIR/SHAKEN caller ID authentication framework. The CAC advised the FCC on the most important factors providers should think about when displaying authentication and other call information to consumers. The CAC helped FCC lay groundwork for a robocall report on the availability and effectiveness of call blocking solutions, including advanced methods and tools to eliminate unwanted or illegal robocalls, as well as the impact of call blocking on 911 and public safety. This work is very important and has been well-received by the public. Chairman Pai is very confident that consumers will be well-served by the FCC's and CAC's collaboration.

Brendan Carr, Commissioner, FCC
Commissioner Carr thanked CAC members for their time and service. He commented that meeting virtually highlights how much the world has changed since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. He added that it has been amazing to see the massive uptick in telehealth usage. Healthcare providers have commented that, without the FCC's support, they would not have been able to scale up their telehealth services to the level necessary. The FCC works to improve the lives of consumers using telehealth and telecommunications services. He commented that the FCC is very grateful for the CAC and its dedication to consumers.

FCC Staff Presentations and Updates
Panel A: Addressing COVID-19 Challenges
Accessibility During the Pandemic – Diane Burstein, Deputy Chief, CGB
Patrick Webre, Chief of the CGB, asked Ms. Burstein to express his appreciation to the CAC for the work

they've done during this term. Once the pandemic hit, the CGB worked to ensure the uninterrupted provision of Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS). TRS providers were experiencing a number of different issues due to a sharp increase in traffic levels and sharp decrease in the number of communications assistants (CAs) in call centers. In March, the FCC granted a Waiver Order that relaxed rules to allow more CAs to work from home and made operational changes in response to the pandemic. The FCC later granted a waiver to expand the pool of those who can provide ASL interpreting. The FCC has extended these waivers multiple times, most recently until November 30th, 2020.

The CGB has taken measures to ensure the public has access to emergency information. Under the FCC's emergency information rules, critical details about the pandemic must be presented both orally and visually. The CGB has also made clear that it is a best practice to ensure that any ASL interpreters are visible onscreen. In May, the FCC and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) released a letter to governors and the DC Mayor about providing access to certain essential workers to ensure these workers have appropriate resources and access to facilities. This letter included businesses and personnel that provide communications support to people with disabilities as well as TRS and closed captioning providers. CAC members have been provided with a list of resources that can be contacted for assistance with these measures as well as contact information for the FCC's Disability Rights Office (DRO).

***COVID-19 Scam Alerts and Updated Consumer Guides** – Ed Bartholme, Associate Chief, CGB*
The CGB is tracking COVID-19 scams and collaborating with the FCC's Enforcement Bureau, federal and state partners, and industry to track emerging COVID-19 scams and publicize the tactics being used by fraudsters. Scam variations and COVID-19-based hooks continue to evolve and often revolve around current news headlines. For example, fraudsters have called and scammed consumers under the guise of contact tracing. Contact tracing presents a unique messaging challenge to the CGB: although important to answer, contact tracing calls often come from unknown numbers. Answering unknown numbers goes against current CGB scam protection guidance. In its consumer alerts, the CGB has reminded consumers to never click on links in text messages from unknown senders and that legitimate contact tracers will not ask for insurance information, bank account information, credit card numbers, Social Security Numbers, or payments. Consumers should hang up if a caller asks for this information.

In May, the CGB released a post on COVID-19 scams that target older Americans. In early September, the CGB released a post on pharmacy scams with a COVID-19 theme. Staff has developed a new page layout for www.fcc.gov/COVID-scams to account for the increase in COVID-19 consumer content. The page continues to contain sample audio from scam calls and examples of scam texts, as well as alerts for particularly pernicious scams. The page also contains phone hygiene and home network optimization guides. The page has been visited over 120,000 times since its launch.

There has been a reduction in unwanted call complaints since March. Recent reports indicate an upward trend in unwanted call volume, but levels still remain below pre-March levels. A recent report indicates that political campaign calls have filled some of the void left by scammers. The CGB will release an updated version of its political call and text guide in the near future.

A back-to-school guide can be found at www.fcc.gov/back-to-school. The guide aggregates a number of existing FCC resources to help students and parents navigate the new school year, and contains a link to a list of providers who have gone above and beyond the Keep Americans Connected Pledge. CGB is conducting active outreach to inform consumers about these resources. CAC members who are not receiving the

Consumer Affairs and Outreach Division's emails, newsletters, or monthly partner call updates can email outreach@fcc.gov to be added to the list. CGB has updated the Lifeline and E-rate consumer guides to reflect COVID-19-related waivers and extensions. The www.fcc.gov/coronavirus webpage contains an updated list of actions taken by the FCC in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the summer, the CGB launched a new consumer guide and social media campaign on SIM swapping, port-out scams, and other cellphone frauds. In collaboration with the DRO, CGB launched an ASL version of the Lifeline consumer guide. The Office of Engineering and Technology recently released an updated version of the FCC's Speedtest app for consumers. On October 8th at 2pm, an FCC livestream panel discussion will mark the 10th anniversary of the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA). The panel will be followed by the 2020 Chairman's Awards for Advancement in Accessibility.

***Update on Telehealth Initiatives** – Hayley Steffen, Attorney-Advisor, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, WCB*
The FCC's COVID-19 Telehealth Program originated out of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act passed in March. Congress appropriated $200 million for the FCC to help eligible healthcare providers and their provision of connected care services during the COVID-19 pandemic. The FCC established the COVID-19 Telehealth Program on April 2nd and accepted applications from April 13th to June 25th. The FCC received thousands of applications and prioritized funding to eligible healthcare providers located in areas most affected by the pandemic. On July 8th, the FCC exhausted the appropriated funds and has since issued 539 funding commitments to healthcare providers nationwide. More information about the program can be found at www.fcc.gov/COVID-19-telehealth-program.

The FCC's Connected Care Pilot Program is an upcoming telehealth initiative that was initiated by a Notice of Inquiry asking how the FCC could examine ways to expand telehealth and how the Universal Service Fund (USF) could be used to expand the provision of telehealth. The Pilot Program was established on April 2nd and is a limited duration program. It will make available up to $100 million of USF support over a three year funding period to help defray healthcare providers' qualifying costs of providing connected care services. Unlike the FCC's Telehealth Program, the Connected Care Pilot Program is under the legal authority of the USF. As a result, more rules and regulations are attached to the Connected Care Program. Eligible participants are listed in Section 254 of the Telecommunications Act and interested providers can file an FCC Form 460 to determine their eligibility. Eligible services include 85% of the qualifying costs of patient broadband internet access services, healthcare provider broadband data connection, other connected care information services, and certain network equipment. The program will not fund end user devices or medical equipment. The Connected Care Pilot Program application is not yet available. However, the FCC has released a public notice detailing the application requirements. The FCC will announce when the application filing window will be open. Interested applicants can check www.fcc.gov/connectedcarepilot for updates.

Q&A: Committee Members
Vice Chair Berlyn thanked the CGB for their work and asked if there are any updates on outreach for Lifeline. Mr. Bartholme responded that materials were sent out earlier this month in conjunction with Lifeline Awareness Week. The CGB's outreach team has also done direct email outreach to ensure the public is aware of different Lifeline waivers enacted during the pandemic. He added that earlier this year, the FCC Chairman and state entities signed a joint letter on raising awareness about Lifeline and its current waivers.

Panel B: Combatting Robocalls

Call Blocking Report and Order -- *Jerusha Burnett, Attorney-Advisor, Consumer Policy Division, CGB*
The Call Blocking Report and Order was issued in July 2020 and adopts two safe harbors that provide protection from liability to VSPs that block calls. The Order also establishes certain protections for callers. The first safe harbor builds on the 2019 Declaratory Ruling allowing providers to block calls believed to be unwanted based on reasonable analytics on an informed opt-out basis. If this incorporates caller ID authentication information, the safe harbor provides protection from liability to VSPs that block based on reasonable analytics, which must include caller ID authentication information designed to identify unwanted calls on an informed opt-out basis. A terminating VSP seeking safe harbor must, at a minimum, have deployed an effective caller ID authentication framework within their own network, accepted caller ID authentication information transmitted by an upstream VSP, and incorporated this information into its analytics when possible. At this time, only the STIR/SHAKEN framework qualifies; however, the Order does leave open the option for other caller ID authentication methods.

The second safe harbor provides protection for VSPs that block all traffic from upstream providers that are bad actors. If the FCC notifies a provider about illegal traffic on their network and the provider fails to effectively mitigate this traffic or fails to implement effective measures to prevent new and renewing customers from using their network to originate illegal calls, downstream providers may block calls from this bad actor provider. The order directs the bad actor provider to notify the Traceback Consortium and the FCC of the steps it has taken to effectively mitigate the illegal traffic within 48 hours. Downstream providers are expected to notify the bad actor before blocking calls.

There are three elements of the established protections: VSPs should not block calls to 911, VSPs should make all reasonable efforts to ensure calls from public safety answering points (PSAPs) and government outbound emergency numbers are not blocked, and VSPs should designate a single point of contact to report blocking errors at no charge to callers or other VSPs. Blocking VSPs must investigate and resolve blocking disputes in a reasonable amount of time and at no cost to the caller, as long as the complaint is made in good faith. The Report and Order also contained a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) seeking comment on further implementation of the TRACED Act and further protection for both callers and consumers. The NPRM's reply comment window closes on September 29th, 2020.

Call Blocking Tools Report – *Mika Savir, Attorney-Advisor, Consumer Policy Division, CGB*
The CGB released the Call Blocking Tools Report on June 25th as required by the 2019 Call Blocking Declaratory Ruling. The FCC has sought to protect consumers from illegal and unwanted calls by authorizing VSPs to block such calls before they reach consumers. Since 2017, the FCC has permitted VSPs to block certain likely fraudulent calls, such as calls using invalid, unallocated, or unused numbers or numbers on the Do Not Originate (DNO) list. In 2019, the FCC clarified that VSPs could offer call blocking services on an opt-out basis to consumers when blocking is based on reasonable analytics designed to identify unwanted calls. The FCC also stated that VSPs may offer to block calls from numbers that are not on a consumer's contact list on an opt-in basis.

The Call Blocking Tools Report contains information on the state of deployment of advanced methods and tools to eliminate illegal and unwanted calls, including the impact of call blocking on 911 and public safety. The CGB will issue a second report on these issues in June 2021. When drafting the report, the CGB received comments on call blocking issues from parties such as VSPs, third party analytics companies, and trade associations. Most VSPs stated that, following the 2017 Call Blocking Report and Order, they block

calls at the network level from numbers on the DNO list or from numbers that appear to be invalid, outdated, or unused. Additionally, most VSPs offer call blocking and labeling services for unwanted calls on an opt-in or opt-out basis. For the most part, these services are offered through a third party analytics company partner. Consumers can also directly obtain call blocking and labeling services through third party analytics companies. These actions have led to increased consumer choice. The Call Blocking Tools Report contains details on the offerings and practices of a number of VSPs. VSPs describe their call blocking and labeling options on their websites. VSPs have successfully blocked millions of illegal or unwanted calls.

Hospital Robocalls Protection Group – *Donna Cyrus, Designated Federal Officer, CGB*
The FCC established the Hospital Robocalls Protection Group (HRPG) on June 25th, 2020 as required in the TRACED Act. The HRPG is a federal advisory committee dedicated to combating robocalls to hospitals. The HRPG is required to produce hospital robocall mitigation recommendations no later than the week of December 21st, 2020. In accordance with the TRACED Act, the HRPG will issue best practices regarding the following: how VSPs can better combat unlawful robocalls made to hospitals, how hospitals can better protect themselves from unlawful robocalls, and how the federal and state governments can help combat unlawful robocalls made to hospitals.

The HRPG met for the first time on July 27th. Since then, its three working groups have been actively meeting and working to produce the required recommendations. The TRACED Act also requires that the FCC complete a proceeding no later than June 2021 to assess the extent to which the voluntary adoption of the best practices can be facilitated to protect hospitals and other institutions. More information about the HRPG can be found at www.fcc.gov/hospital-robocall-protection-group.

Q&A: Committee Members
Member Leech asked if call blocking services are included in VSPs' base rates. Ms. Savir responded that basic call blocking services do not cost extra; however, some VSPs offer a higher level of call blocking services for an extra charge.

Panel C: Advancing Emergency Response Capabilities
PSAPs' Real-Time Text Capacity – *Suzy Singleton, Chief, Disability Rights Office, CGB*
Text telephone (TTY) technology has existed since the 1970s for people who rely on text-based communication over the telephone network. TTY technology was developed for use on the public switched telephone network (PSTN). The FCC requires carriers to support TTY technology on their networks. However, TTY technology does not work well on IP-based networks, causing the quality of communication to be severely diminished. As a result, TTY usage has significantly decreased. Real-time text (RTT) has been recognized as a possible solution in an IP environment. AT&T filed a petition requesting that the FCC update its rules to transition to RTT. RTT is much more advanced than TTY: it can be fully integrated with mainstream voice communications, can be used with off-the-shelf devices, and uses Unicode character sets.

In December 2016, the FCC adopted rules to facilitate the transition to RTT over wireless IP technologies. These new rules permitted covered entities to support RTT in lieu of supporting TTY on all wireless networks and equipment, including services and devices used in legacy non-IP environments and facilities. Covered entities include IP-based wireless providers and manufacturers of end-user equipment. Required RTT core functionalities include interoperability across networks and services, use of RFC 4103 as the safe harbor standard, backwards compatibility with TTY, support for 911 communications, simultaneous voice and text in the same call session, and the ability to send and receive calls with the same phone number.

Backwards compatibility with TTY is particularly important because most 911 call centers are mid-transition to IP networks. At this time, most 911 call centers may still be using TTYs.

The FCC's compliance timelines for service providers and manufacturers have already passed. Tier 1 commercial mobile radio service (CMRS) providers are already in compliance. These providers offer one of two options: 1) a downloadable RTT app or plug-in to support RTT and 2) a native RTT functionality implemented in the core network and offered in at least one handset model. Non-tier 1 providers were required to be in compliance by June 30th, 2020. FCC is now reviewing waiver requests from some of these non-tier 1 carriers. By June 30th, 2021, non-tier 1 providers, including resellers, choosing to support RTT must have implemented RTT for all new authorized users. Manufacturers that chose to support RTT were required to implement RTT in newly manufactured equipment by December 31, 2018 if readily achievable or unless not achievable.

PSAPs have TTYs and RTT should be backwards compatible; as a result, PSAPs should already be ready for RTT. The FCC requires carriers to deliver text messages to text-capable PSAPs within six months of a PSAP's request. The FCC maintains a text-to-911 registry; RTT will be included upon Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval of the updated form. The comment period for the updated form closed in early September 2020 with no opposition. The text-to-911 registry can be found at www.fcc.gov/text-to-911. RTT resources for the 911 call center can be found at www.fcc.gov/rtt. On August 3rd, 2020, the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) published draft guidance for installation and use of RTT in PSAPs.

***National Suicide and Mental Health Lifeline** – Jesse Goodwin, Attorney-Advisor, Competition Policy Division, WCB*
The FCC has designated 988 for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline to be available July 16th, 2022. The number is not yet active; those trying to call the Lifeline should use its current number. On August 14, 2018 Congress passed the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act, which tasked the FCC with examining and reporting on the technical feasibility of designating a three digit dialing code for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline. A year later, the FCC, in conjunction with several other agencies, released a report recommending the adoption of 988 for this purpose. This number was chosen because it is a unique three digit code and so would be simpler and less disruptive to implement than repurposing an existing code. Additionally, it is less technically complicated than other unique three digit dialing codes.

On December 16, 2019, the FCC released an NPRM to propose the designation of 988 as the three digit dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. After receiving a robust record of comments, the FCC adopted a Report and Order that designated 988 as the three digit code for the Lifeline and required providers to implement it within two years. All telecommunications carriers, interconnected voice over IP (VoIP) providers, and one way VoIP providers are required to make any network changes needed to ensure that users can dial 988 to reach the Lifeline by July 16, 2022. Prior to this transition, providers will route calls made to 988 to the existing Lifeline number. Providers are also required to implement 10 digit dialing in areas that both use seven digit dialing and 988 as the first three digits of a number. Consumers who use non-voice communication can receive help through several suicide prevention text messaging options, as well as the Lifeline's online chat and separate TTY number.

Q&A: Committee Members
Member Leech asked why it will take two years to implement 988 as the National Suicide Prevention

Lifeline three digit code. Mr. Goodwin responded that due to a number of technological and logistical hurdles, this date is the earliest technically feasible data possible.

Panel D: Promoting 21st Century Technologies and Services
Spectrum and Infrastructure Policies to Accelerate Access to Spectrum and 5G Deployment – Susan Mort, Legal and Policy Advisor, WTB
5G technology poses a real potential benefit to the US economy at large. Studies estimate that the deployment of 5G will generate 3 million new jobs, $275 billion in private investments, and $500 billion in new economic growth in the US. Connection speeds are estimated to be 100 times faster and lag times one-tenth the length of those in 4G. 5G will enable smart cities and smart transportation networks that will reduce traffic, prevent accidents, and limit pollution. 5G will also enable wireless healthcare, remote surgeries, precision agriculture, industry automation, and other innovations yet to be imagined.

The FCC has undertaken its 5G Fast Plan initiative to accelerate 5G deployment. This initiative is a market-based US approach to promote 5G innovation, investments, and deployment and has three key components: 1) pushing more spectrum into the marketplace, 2) updating infrastructure policy, and 3) modernizing outdated regulations. As a result of steps taken in accordance with these components, the roll-out of 5G systems is underway nationwide. The FCC is implementing different actions throughout different spectrum ranges, as well as in the unlicensed space, to ensure there is a variety of applications and utilities available. Having spectrum in high-band, mid-band, low-band, and unlicensed spaces will enable different uses. There have been a number of different auctions in the high-band range in recent years. The 28 GHz band auction was completed in January 2019, the 24 GHz band auction was completed in May 2019, and the 37, 39, and 47 GHz auction was completed in March 2020.

The FCC has also undertaken a number of mid-band initiatives. The 2.5 GHz band has historically been under-utilized due to eligibility and use restrictions, particularly in the western US. In order to modernize this band for future uses, the FCC: 1) eliminated eligibility and use restrictions for both existing and new licensees to enable more flexible uses, 2) opened a Rural Tribal Priority Window to give federally-recognized tribes an opportunity to apply for licenses at no cost for any unsigned 2.5 GHz spectrum within the former Educational Broadband Service (EBS) that was opened over their rural tribal plans, and 3) conducted a commercial auction of any remaining unsigned spectrum. The FCC had over 400 applications for the Rural Tribal Priority Window, 157 of which it has already accepted for filing. The FCC hopes to help bridge the digital divide in rural tribal areas by providing opportunities to entities other than traditional carriers to gain access to spectrum. The FCC has reserved almost half of the 3.5 GHz band for general authorized access. In order to use the band, entities must have compliant equipment, sign up with an FCC authorized spectrum access system, and follow the compliance rules of the band. No formal license is required. Although this access does not provide the same level of interference protection as other licensed services, it offers a low barrier of entry to access. The FCC has made targeted changes to the 600 MHz, 800 MHz, and 900 MHz bands to improve use of low-band spectrum for 5G services. The FCC is also looking at opportunities for unlicensed use of spectrum across the different spectrum ranges. For example, it is creating opportunities to enable wifi in the 6 GHz, 61-71 GHz, and above 95 GHz bands.

One of FCC's primary goals is to ensure that quickly-deployable facilities are available for 5G services. In order to facilitate the review of these infrastructure projects, the FCC has modernized federal historic preservation and environmental reviews of wireless deployments and has removed regulatory barriers and instituted two new shot clocks for small wireless facilities. Section 6409(a) of the Spectrum Act streamlined

state and local government review of certain requests to modify transmission equipment on existing structures. The FCC adopted a Declaratory Ruling in June 2020 clarifying when the 60-day shot clock for local review begins and how certain aspects of proposed modifications might impact the eligibility for streamlined review under the rules. The Ruling clarified a portion of the FCC's rules on environmental and historic preservation review that differed from most other US federal agencies. The FCC has also adopted an NPRM seeking comment on proposed rule changes regarding excavation and deployment outside the boundaries of an existing tower site and the effects of such activities on eligibility for streamlined review. The goal of these actions is to ensure that infrastructure deployments can move quickly. The FCC has modernized a number of outdated regulations. It has updated its rules governing the attachment of new network equipment to utility poles in order to reduce cost and facilitate 5G backhaul deployment. The FCC has also revised its rules to make it easier for companies to invest in next-generation networks and services and has incentivized investment in modern fiber networks by lifting rate regulation for high-speed, dedicated services where appropriate.

***Rural Digital Opportunity Fund and 5G Fund for Rural America** – Audra Hale-Maddox, Chief of Staff, Rural Broadband Auctions Task Force, OEA*
In 2011, the FCC determined that the USF program could be used to support extending voice and broadband services. Since then, the FCC has been working on using USF funds to support the expansion of fixed and mobile broadband in areas that are difficult to serve for geographic or economic reasons. The FCC has used competitive bidding, specifically reverse auctions, to efficiently distribute this support. Reverse auctions are a formal process in which providers tell the FCC the lowest support amount they can use to serve a specific, pre-defined geographic region to the required performance standards. Reverse auctions allow the FCC to compare bids in different areas throughout the US in order to most efficiently serve the broadest area possible. Past reverse auctions have used one time funding rather than ongoing funding for service provision over an extended period of time.

In 2014, the ConnectAmerica Cost Model (CAM) auctions estimated costs of providing services to specific locations within specific hard-to-serve census blocks. Blocks above a specified benchmark average cost were eligible for the CAM program. In 2015, this model-based support was offered to price cap carriers. Nine carriers accepted over $1.5 billion a year to serve 3.6 million homes and businesses in their study areas by the end of 2020. The FCC recently completed phase II of the ConnectAmerica Fund and is still in the process of authorizing the funding won in that auction. This auction is distributing $1.48 billion over 10 years for fixed broadband and voice services to specific locations. On September 23rd, the FCC closed the window for entities seeking to participate in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction. The phase I auction is extending up to $16 billion of funding and begins October 29th, 2020. Any funds not expended during the phase I auction will be available in the phase II auction, in addition to another $4.4 billion of funding.

The FCC has proposed the 5G Fund for Rural America to extend wireless mobile broadband funding into rural America for 5G. The Fund has been proposed to extend up to $9 billion for 5G service, with up to $1 billion in a second round to facilitate precision agriculture in specific regions of the US. Unlike previous USF-funded programs, the 5G Fund will not be gap filling for unserved areas. The FCC has committed to ensuring that rural America will not be left behind as more urban areas transition to 5G. The 5G Fund aims to proactively expand 5G service to difficult-to-serve areas using USF funding. The FCC is examining eligibility by degree of rurality versus by coverage to ensure that funding is only sent to areas that need it. The FCC asked for comment from the public and providers on the possibility of using other coverage as proxies for areas that might be easily served with 5G without needing USF funding. The FCC has also asked

for public comment on an adjustment factor to preference difficult terrain or economically impoverished rural areas and for comment on rolling out a scheme of public interest obligations for legacy support recipients.

Q&A: Committee Members
Member Kampis asked if any metrics are available showing the effectiveness of the FCC's 5G Fast Plan. Ms. Mort responded that the 5G environment is rapidly changing on a day-to-day basis, which makes it difficult to track other than through periodic snapshots.

Committee Members Discussion and Questions from the Public
Member Leech commented that although she appreciates efforts to provide broadband service to rural areas, she is unsure whether enough has been done to incentivize this process. Rural areas will have trouble being economically self-sufficient until this lack of connectivity is resolved. She added that many areas that would not be considered especially rural are also experiencing a lack of connectivity. Member Defalco agreed with Member Leech and added that although the FCC has been doing a good job using subsidy mechanisms to expand connectivity into rural areas, the upload speeds coming out of the current subsidy programs are not sufficient. He commented that the FCC should explore whether these programs are actually effective for rural America.

There were no public comments.

Farewell and Appreciation
Chair Pociask thanked CAC members and FCC staff for their work during this term. Mr. Marshall expressed his appreciation for the CAC's ability to discuss and create recommendations that all sides can agree to. He thanked the CAC staff team and CGB management for their work.

The FCC is reviewing applications from its public solicitation for the 11th CAC term. Mr. Marshall expects the FCC to announce membership for the 11th term in the near future. The General Services Administration is currently reviewing the CAC's charter for renewal. Mr. Marshall expects to receive an approval for renewal in the near future.

Adjournment
There being no other business, Chair Pociask adjourned the meeting at 1:53 pm.