UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

 FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

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 CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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 MEETING

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 WEDNESDAY

 DECEMBER 11, 2019

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The Advisory Committee met in the Commissioners Meeting Room, 445 12th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C., at 9:00 a.m., Steve Pociask, Chairman, presiding.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

AJIT PAI, Chairman

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

STEVE POCIASK, Committee Chairman

DEBRA R. BERLYN, National Consumers League

ZAINAB ALKEBSI, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer

Advocacy Network

SAM BRINTON, The Trevor Project

BARBARA BURTON, National Association of State

Utility Consumer Advocates

FARHAN CHUGHTAI, USTelecom

JOSLYN DAY, Massachusetts Department of

Telecommunications and Cable

B. LYNN FOLLANSBEE, USTelecom

MATTHEW GERST, CTIA - The Wireless Association

SUSAN GRANT, Consumer Federation of America \*

JONATHON HAUENSCHILD, American Legislative

Exchange Counsel

BRIAN HURLEY, America's Communications

Association - ACA Connects

JOHNNY KAMPIS, serving individually as a subject-

matter expert, Special Government Employee

ERIC KOCH, serving individually as a subject-

matter expert, Special Government Employee

SARAH LEGGIN, CTIA

VONDA LONG-DILLARD, AT&T

STEVEN MORRIS, NCTA ‑ The Internet and Television

Association

SHIRLEY ROOKER, Call for Action \*

MICHAEL SANTORELLI, serving individually as a

subject-matter expert, Special Government

Employee

BARRY UMANSKY, Digital Policy Institute \*

LARRY WALKE, National Association of

Broadcasters\*

BRIAN YOUNG, National Consumers League

BOHDAN ZACHARY, Milwaukee PBS

COMMISSION STAFF:

SCOTT MARSHALL, Designated Federal Official

CHRISTINE CLEARWATER, Deputy Designated Federal

Official

EDUARD BARTHOLME

DIANE BURSTEIN

RASHANN DUVALL

BARBARA ESBIN

JESSE JACHMAN

JULIUS KNAPP

LORI MAARBJERG

JACLYN ROSEN

MARK STONE

KRISTI THOMPSON

PATRICK WEBRE

\*Present by teleconference

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P‑R‑O‑C‑E‑E‑D‑I‑N‑G‑S

 9:12 a.m.

CHAIR POCIASK: Well, welcome, everyone, and thank you for attending the Consumer Advisory Committee meeting today. So, welcome to you all. Let me call the meeting to order.

So, we're going to have introductions in just a second. Let me just start. I have a sign-in sheet, if you wouldn't mind just checking off your name, and we'll check later on because we do have a recommendation queued up later this afternoon, so we want to make sure that we get a quorum.

So if I can, let me just start it around this way and we can come back. Just see your name and check it off, if you're substituted for someone else, just indicate that, and then with that, let's begin.

Just one thing I just want to keep in terms of protocol is if you have a question or a comment you want to make, make sure you raise your hand. That also helps queue up the mics in the back as well.

So let's begin the introductions. So I'm Steve Pociask. I'm with the American Consumer Institute and it's a pleasure to see you all. Let me turn it over to Debbie, and let's just go around and just do quick introductions.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: Hi, I'm Debbie Berlyn representing the National Consumers League.

MEMBER HAUENSCHILD: Jonathon Hauenschild representing the American Legislative Exchange Council.

MEMBER KOCH: Indiana State Senator Eric Koch serving as a subject matter expert.

MEMBER LEGGIN: Sarah Leggin representing CTIA.

MEMBER LONG-DILLARD: Vonda Long at AT&T.

MEMBER GERST: Matt Gerst with CTIA.

MEMBER MORRIS: Steve Morris, NCTA.

MEMBER FOLLANSBEE: Lynn Follansbee, USTelecom.

MEMBER CHUGHTAI: Farhan Chughtai, USTelecom.

MEMBER SANTORELLI: Michael Santorelli serving individually.

MEMBER BURTON: Good morning, I'm Barbara Burton, the alternate for Thaddeus Johnson who represents NASUCA.

MEMBER ZACHARY: Good morning, I'm Bohdan Zachary from Milwaukee PBS.

MEMBER HURLEY: Good morning, Brian Hurley, ACA Connects.

MEMBER ALKEBSI: Good morning, this is Zainab Alkebsi from the National Association of the Deaf representing the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer Advocacy Network.

MEMBER DAY: Good morning, Joslyn Day, Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and Cable.

MEMBER KAMPIS: Johnny Kampis serving individually with the Taxpayers Protection Alliance.

MEMBER BRINTON: Sam Brinton, Head of Advocacy and Government Affairs for The Trevor Project, the nation's LGBT suicide hotline.

MS. CLEARWATER: Christina Clearwater, Deputy Designated Federal Officer.

MR. MARSHALL: And I'm Scott Marshall, the Designated Federal Officer for the Committee.

CHAIR POCIASK: And do we have anybody online, somebody who maybe called into the bridge? Can we check?

MEMBER UMANSKY: -- Digital Policy Institute.

MEMBER GRANT: Susan Grant, Consumers Federation of America.

CHAIR POCIASK: Who was the first person?

MEMBER UMANSKY: Yeah, Barry Umansky, Digital Policy Institute.

MEMBER WALKE: Larry Walke from the National Association of Broadcasters.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: It was Barry?

CHAIR POCIASK: Yeah, it's Barry.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: Okay.

CHAIR POCIASK: Barry was the first person.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: He was the first one? Okay.

CHAIR POCIASK: Yeah.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: All right.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay, good, so we'll have to keep tabs on the attendance today. At approximately 11:50 today, we'll need a quorum for our, a recommended, a recommendation that we're going to try to vote out.

So, with that, let me also take a moment here to thank CTIA for our food that they're providing us with, both the breakfast and lunch today, so thanks so much for helping us out.

(Applause.)

CHAIR POCIASK: So, now, I hope everyone has an agenda in front. We have a lot of things to do, a few slides and a video to queue up, and some, I think, interesting discussions on issues of 5G, and the pilot program, and things such as that, so that will be one of the important items for the day.

So, Scott, did you want to start with a video or --

MR. MARSHALL: I take it the Chairman has not yet arrived?

CHAIR POCIASK: Not yet.

MR. MARSHALL: Okay, why don't we talk about the, in the interim, meeting dates --

CHAIR POCIASK: Yeah, okay, so --

MR. MARSHALL: -- potential meetings dates for the remainder of the year --

CHAIR POCIASK: Right.

MR. MARSHALL: -- or the remainder of this term?

CHAIR POCIASK: So, a couple of things, first, we're going to have a special hybrid teleconference and it will also be available as an in-person meeting on February 13 from 2:00 to 3:00, and this will deal with the Robocall Report Working Group, and hopefully they'll have a recommendation for us, so it will be a special hybrid meeting. Again, that's February 13 from 2:00 to 3:00.

Our next plenary meeting will be Friday -- tentatively, it's Friday, April 17, so you want to mark your calendar and let me know, so that's April 17. That's the tentative meeting date.

And then the September meeting will either be Wednesday, September 23 or Friday, September 25. Again, these are all tentative dates in terms of the -- our quarterly meetings are concerned.

MR. MARSHALL: Does anyone have any concerns about those dates?

CHAIR POCIASK: Yeah, does anything -- yeah, does --

MR. MARSHALL: Conflicts with meetings, that kind of thing?

CHAIR POCIASK: Yeah, yeah, check on that and let me know if there is a problem, so that's kind of -- you know, all we've done on that part is really just check with the availability of the room and that sort of thing, so we're good to go as far as we know, all right, excellent.

MR. MARSHALL: And we'll send out a hold the date confirmation email --

CHAIR POCIASK: Right.

MR. MARSHALL: -- as well if we can't decide these dates definitely today.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay, good.

MR. MARSHALL: That takes care of that.

CHAIR POCIASK: All right, should we wait another minute?

MR. MARSHALL: Yeah, let's wait a few.

CHAIR POCIASK: We just have a minute. We have the Chairman joining us for a few comments and he should be here just any moment.

MR. MARSHALL: Don't go away.

(Laughter.)

MR. MARSHALL: Don't go away.

MS. CLEARWATER: He's on his way.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay, great, okay.

MR. MARSHALL: Steve, do I have a mic in front of me? Oh, here it is. Here's the microphone, yeah. Just one further comment. We'll have lunch at 12:10 just after we consider the Caller ID Authentication Working Group proposed recommendation, and then we'll be back in the afternoon for some further discussion and also our last presenter, and then we probably will adjourn shortly before 2:00. Okay, so that's the remainder of the day.

We're also going to circulate, as an experiment, a food and drink preferences sheet so that we can order food more intelligently for the April meeting in terms of your preferences and all of that stuff.

I don't know if I can guarantee anything as a result of that, but it will at least give us an idea of how many of which sandwich variety to order, and beverages, and that kind of stuff, so let's see how that works in terms of going forward. If it does, we'll do it for each meeting.

CHAIR POCIASK: So, starting us off then, we have the Chairman to provide us some remarks. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PAI: Thanks so much, Steve, and I apologize for being a little bit late. It was a wild night for me, needless to say, but that's why the traditional mug is not here. It's a little hungover, so I've got the substitute here this morning, but --

(Off-mic comment.)

CHAIRMAN PAI: Yeah, exactly. But I'm really happy to be here this morning with all of you. It's good to see all of you here at the Commission, and I want to give a special thanks to our distinguished chair, Steve, and our vice chair, Debbie.

And as you know, Debbie previously served as the chairperson of the CAC for three terms. This is the fourth iteration, so I guess that makes you the Franklin Delano Roosevelt of the Consumer Advisory Committee, so --

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN PAI: -- but many more terms. You're not term limited in this regard.

But I did want to talk for a little bit about our top consumer protection priority, and I know it is something that you have thought about a lot as well, which is tackling the scourge of unwanted robocalls. I've already gotten a couple this morning, and it just drives all us of crazy.

In the month of October alone, something like 5.7 billion robocalls were launched at American consumers. That's something like 2,115 every single second, and this is one of the reasons why American consumers are so frustrated every time they feel that phone vibrate or hear it ring.

And again, that's why it's our top consumer protection priority, but obviously the FCC can't tackle this problem alone. We need the assistance of folks like you, consumer advocates who could help us address this issue.

So we've done a few different things that I'm sure you've heard of before, but I'll just tick through very quickly. We've enabled phone companies to block calls that are highly likely to be illegal, coming from area codes that don't exist, for example, which is a pretty good sign.

We've also clarified that providers can, voice providers can immediately start offering call blocking services by default so that consumers don't have to proactively call their phone company and sign up for those services.

We've closed a loophole by banning malicious caller ID spoofing of text messages and foreign calls. We don't want to see text messaging, for example, become one of those services that is inundated with spam.

We've also created a reassigned numbers database so those legitimate callers who are trying to call a number that has been reassigned don't end up giving you the hassle that was meant for somebody else.

We've also taken aggressive enforcement action against bad actors, including the largest fines in the FCC's history. We've issued advisories.

Every time we hear about one of these scams, for example, the one-ring scam, where you might get a call in the middle of the night from Mauritania and it would ring just once and it would try to entice the consumer into calling back, and that's the kind of thing we've issued advisories on.

And we've done a lot of webinars and tele-town halls thanks in part to our fantastic Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau.

And while we're on the topic of outreach, I do want to say I look forward to the recommendations that you'll be considering this afternoon regarding consumer education about the implementation of SHAKEN/STIR of STIR/SHAKEN.

I guess we have to go back to the Ian Fleming books to figure out what the proper order of that is, but --

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN PAI: -- the important thing is that it's an improvement to caller ID authentication.

And along those lines, and I don't blame you if you don't follow me on Twitter, but you might have seen that I had the first official cross border SHAKEN/STIR authenticated call with my counterpart in Canada, the Chairman of the CRTC, Mr. Ian Scott, and it was pretty impressive.

When he called me, I could see on my phone Ian Scott, or Chairman Scott is verified, and it was something, I have to say, to be able to answer the phone knowing, okay, it is definitely Ian Scott.

It's not somebody purporting to give me a free Marriott vacation, or speaking in Chinese, or whatever. I mean, nothing against Putonghua, but I don't want to hear a language I don't understand.

So anyway, this demonstrates our joint commitment to this fight against robocalls, and I'm determined that we continue to press this issue domestically so that we can finally help attack this problem.

And I've made clear that I expect major voice providers to implement this framework by the end of this year, and if they fail to do so, we'll be taking action in the new year to ensure that they do.

And so your recommendations on the needs for caller ID authentication back in February of 2018 was very helpful in getting us to this point today.

I also want to thank you for a recommendation that you made in September that service providers should notify consumers if calls intended for them are blocked, as well as offer consumers a call log of blocked calls or any similar tools that they can be able to access, and our staff is looking at those recommendations.

So the bottom line is there is no silver bullet to this problem. We have to take a multi-pronged approach and a multi-stakeholder approach, and so I just wanted to thank you again for all of your efforts on this issue.

Now, despite the fact that it drives everybody crazy, this isn't the only consumer protection issue we are working on, and so I know you're looking at other issues as well, and continue to be in touch with us. Give us your feedback and let us know what we can do to help advance the ball on behalf of the public interest.

With that, I don't want to belabor my welcome, but I just want to thank you once again for all of your work here at the Commission, and I look forward to working with you in the time to come, so thank you for inviting me.

CHAIR POCIASK: Yeah, do you have a moment to just take a couple of questions?

CHAIRMAN PAI: Oh, sure, yeah.

CHAIR POCIASK: Yeah, so if anyone has a question, just, you know.

CHAIRMAN PAI: About any of the topics, by the way. We have a lot of exciting stuff going on, including, as some folks know, tomorrow, rolling out my proposal, or hopefully adopting my proposal to establish 988 as the three-digit number for suicide prevention and mental health assistance. A lot of good stuff happening, so feel free to ask about anything under the sun.

CHAIR POCIASK: Any questions? Anyone on the phone?

CHAIRMAN PAI: If only Congressional hearings were like this. This is great!

(Laughter.)

MEMBER BRINTON: Chairman, I'll humbly ask one. So obviously robocalls -- oh, I'm sorry.

PARTICIPANT: And identify yourself.

MEMBER BRINTON: Sorry, thank you. I'm sorry. I'm still learning the process. Sam Brinton, The Trevor Project.

Chairman, obviously robocalls, everyone is talking about them, right? They're a nuisance. There's a lot of different solutions that are coming forward. What do you think is the best? What are some proposals that you've heard on public education around this issue?

Because I think, especially as we talk about suicide prevention, there's a lot of things that -- our phones are our lifelines, right?

 They're our way to connect to people we really care about, and so educating ourselves on why these robocalls are a problem that we're dealing with, but, you know, also what we can do about them, I think, is really important.

It's not just about the technology. It's about the education. So what are some things that you've heard at the Commission around education on this issue?

CHAIRMAN PAI: Certainly part of it is just getting out into the field and meeting consumers on their own turf.

For example, I recently held a town hall in coordination with the AARP out in Nebraska, and meeting with a bunch of consumers, seniors who, they might not think about going to the FCC's website. They're certainly unlikely to visit the FCC's headquarters and watch our proceedings.

So I think it's important for people like me and our staff to get out there and to hold these kind of fora where -- fora for you Latin sticklers -- where we can tell people, "Look, this is some of the things we're doing," but also just the basic stuff that a lot of us take for granted.

If you don't recognize the phone number, don't answer the phone. If you answer the phone, don't give out personal information. Don't say the word "yes." I mean, those are the kinds of low-hanging fruit, so to speak, that I think a lot of consumers would appreciate hearing.

The other part is being just very proactive in working with our federal partners. The Federal Trade Commission and state consumer protection agencies do a great job in helping get the word out.

And along those lines, when was it, a month ago, I guess it was, I was in Boston, Massachusetts where, along with Governor Baker and state officials from Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island and Connecticut, we held a forum about how all of the federal and state partners can work together to advance the ball on consumer protection, and part of it was just making state officials aware of what we're doing and me learning what they're doing so that then we can push out a unified message.

And I look forward to any other ideas that you've got that, but both in word and deed, I really want to make sure that I'm a presence on this issue here and across the country.

MEMBER BRINTON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN PAI: And thank you, by the way. Since you are here, I do want to thank The Trevor Project for the support on 988, along with some of the other stakeholders.

I can't tell you how much I've heard from folks who don't follow the nitty-gritty of what we do, who have followed this issue and have emailed or tweeted saying, "Hey, it's been a long time coming, and this could mean the difference between life and death for those who are struggling with mental health issues," so we really appreciate the support.

MEMBER BRINTON: We're honored to do it.

CHAIR POCIASK: All right, anyone else? Anyone online? All right, well, thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN PAI: Thank you, folks.

CHAIR POCIASK: We appreciate you coming.

CHAIRMAN PAI: Yeah, really good to see you all. Thanks, all right.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN PAI: Oh, thanks.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: I just want to say a thank you to you for your leadership on this issue and other issues, and I just want to ask you if you're going to dance out of this meeting?

(Laughter.)

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: For anyone who was there last night, the Chairman did a dance out of his remarks at the Chairman's Dinner last night, so I just wondered if he was going to dance out for us.

CHAIRMAN PAI: Well, I can say it seemed like a good idea at the time.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN PAI: But at 46 with some shaky knees, I don't know. I may have torn an ACL last night, so I'll probably just have to hobble out at this point, so. Thank you nonetheless for the invitation.

CHAIR POCIASK: Thanks again.

PARTICIPANT: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN PAI: My pleasure.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay, all right, so next, we're going to move up to our 9:30 update on 5G and what it means for consumers, and today we have a presenter, Julius Knapp, the chief, Office of Engineering and Technology, and with 45 years of experience, I understand. Thank you for coming. Let me just get your card back there. Thanks so much. It's a cued up video.

(Laughter.)

MR. KNAPP: Good morning, everybody.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: Good morning.

MR. KNAPP: So as I was preparing, because there's a lot of information out there about 5G, and I was focusing a bit on consumers, and I was amused by some of the headlines. So one of them was, as 5G launches, consumers couldn't care less.

(Laughter.)

MR. KNAPP: So I think we're done. No, I thought before talking about 5G, I'd say a little bit about what we've learned from our past experiences with the prior Gs, so, and I've actually kind of lived every one of these.

So, the first generation of phones, it was, we didn't even know we needed numbers for Gs, so there was speculation about whether it would ever get to be more than a million people with phones, and we all know what happened after that.

When we got to 2G and we went from analog to digital -- and you got to remember at the time, paging was big. You know, people wanted to have pagers. So when we got to 2G, there was short messaging service. Anybody have a pager?

So when we got to 3G, we started to see the first glimpses of internet connectivity and it really kind of set the stage for the game changer that came with 4G.

So why is 4G a game changer? Because it provided a more fulsome internet access, a higher level of connectivity, and data rates, and so forth. So just look at what it has done, whatever your perspective might be, to different industries and the way we look at, we get books, the way we make our hotel reservations, newspapers and the media that we access, our retail, especially this time of year, everybody ordering gifts, taxis and the massive change in that service with the introduction of Lyft and Uber, hotels, restaurants, wearables. It really has changed all of our lives.

I went into a big box store a few days ago and I was just struck that as I walked in, all of the wireless devices, and granted, some of them are Wi-Fi, but the beauty of the Gs is the integration between the Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connectivity, which provide a relatively short range and coverage in hot spots and so forth, with the connection through your smart phone for wide area coverage.

So as I walked into this store, you know, there were the wireless thermostats, the video doorbells, so to speak, so you could sit here in this room, and if somebody is knocking at the door, and you purchased one of these things, you could actually see who was there, and the alarm systems that are there.

So, as the technology has gotten more robust, we're seeing more innovation and more products that are being made available for consumers.

So I think the one thing to take away from all of this is what we should expect is the unexpected. You know, going back again in 4G, nobody had any idea the iPhone was coming, or the apps marketplace and all of the opportunities that that was going to hold.

So, what about 5G? So I will, without the specifics, much greater speed availability, much greater capacity for folks so that you're always getting a highly reliable service, and I think one of the things that's really a game changer is the reduced latency.

What that means, you know, I've often related to people it's what you experience when you see the lips moving on the screen and the voice is coming out a little later. That's latency, and the idea here is to get it down. Once you start to get down well below 10 milliseconds, it allows for real time interactions, and what real time interactions does for you is suddenly you can actually control machines and equipment at a distance and so forth, and it opens up the kinds of applications that need an almost immediate response.

So, let's talk about that a little bit. It's much more than cell phones. You know, folks focus on immediately what they're familiar with and, you know, what is it going to do for my phones?

It's certainly going to do more for the phones. It's always hard to predict what new innovations we're going to see from the phones because they're just getting better and more sophisticated every year.

Just a little story about how it's affected at least my life, we have a little lunch group that sits together each day, and sometimes we get into debates over particular facts, and what tends to happen is everybody pulls out their cell phone to do a little research to make sure that they're the ones who are right.

(Laughter.)

MR. KNAPP: So we're no longer arguing people. It's our phones that are arguing with each other. You really have all of the information of the world at your fingertips, and I think that's only going to get better with 5G.

So what's so different? It really opens up connectivity for what people refer to as the verticals. When in transportation, where if we're going to have vehicle to vehicle technology that's reliable, we have to get down to very low latencies for the interactions between the vehicles, so there's a lot of activity looking at versions of 5G for transportation.

I think when you look across the board in all of the sectors, healthcare, energy, and so forth, it is going to open up new opportunities that we haven't seen before.

Perhaps mistakenly, I sometimes think of consumers as at home, but it really is we're consumers in all facets of our life, and so we're already experiencing the changes from what have come and there's only more to come.

So, here at the Commission, we've been working hard to make sure that we are providing all of the access that 5G is going to need for spectrum, for dealing with things like infrastructure and so forth, and it's, I would say, one of the top priorities at the Commission and across government in trying to make sure that the U.S. leads on 5G.

One of the things that strikes me is also this is sometimes not well understood. It's critical for all of our factories. It is critical for our economy. The factories of today are automated. They have to change things on the fly sometimes. This technology could enable that as well.

Just a couple of myths, and then I'll open it up for questions. So 5G is not a single frequency band. So when you hear folks say, "Oh, it's all millimeter wave band, these high frequencies," and then you see the ad and somebody says it's 5G and you think, "Oh, it's those millimeter wave bands." It's going to be multiple frequency bands.

The carriers all have assets, spectrum assets in different parts of the spectrum. Likely they'll use the higher ranges for high capacity at short distance. The mid-range, which is what we're working hard on right now to make more spectrum available, is kind of a sweet spot because it's a good blend of coverage and capacity. The lower bands are great for coverage at distances, not as much total bandwidth.

If you look at any one in isolation, I would venture to say that there is not one band that is the total solution. It's the combination of all of these things together that really creates the power that you're going to need for 5G.

So I'll stop there and I'd be happy to -- oh, one more point. We have a tendency, I think, nowadays to, you know, the Commission does the rule making and you think, "Gee, it's all there. It's all -- it's going to happen overnight."

It takes time to deploy systems. What you're seeing is kind of the early introductions so far. It will take time to build out the systems. So, you know, I would reserve judgments, whatever judgments you have about 5G and what it's going to do over time. So, I'd be happy to take questions.

MEMBER KOCH: Eric Koch. Thank you for your presentation. Can you comment on where we are relative to other nations on 5G deployment? There's a lot being written about that too.

MR. KNAPP: Yeah, so some of these are my personal thoughts as well. We had our Technological Advisory Council just last week and did a presentation on 5G and the Internet of Things, and there's some terrific information in there about comparing us to where we are in the rest of the world.

China, kind of led through the government, has been heavily investing in base stations and so forth. I think we're still in the lead. Some might debate that, but I think what the real strength is of the United States is our innovation and what you do with it.

It's not just having the ability to have a data rate. It's the creativity where I think the United States has far outstretched everybody else in the world, and I have every expectation that's going to continue to happen.

MEMBER KOCH: Thank you.

CHAIR POCIASK: Go ahead.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: Go ahead.

MEMBER GERST: Hi, Matt Gerst with CTIA, so two comments. One, as we all heard, we all know you're retiring, and so I just wanted to again say thank you for your decades of service and leadership.

(Applause.)

MEMBER GERST: My second comment is, you know, as we're moving into this 5G world, we continue to hear about challenges at the local level, and this being the Consumer Advisory Committee, of local, folks at the local level kind of understanding the value of 5G, understanding, you know, why we need to have the right policies in place to make 5G happen.

What are some of the things that you -- how you think we can address those, you know, by educating the public about what the value and benefits of 5G are?

MR. KNAPP: Yeah, and let me just sort of allude to it. I know sometimes there's questions about the RF exposure compliance and so forth, and last week, the Commission had released an order which basically affirmed the standards that we have in place.

And part of the tasking from the Commission in there was to update our information for consumers and the public to help them understand the technology, because I know there's a lot of speculation and not completely understanding what that's all about.

The proper standards to protect people are in place, and I think there's a bit of work we have to do on the consumer outreach side to help people understand and reassure them that things are fine.

CHAIR POCIASK: Any other questions and anyone on the phone?

MS. CLEARWATER: Hi, this is Christina. Julie, your pending retirement is going to leave quite a gap for us here at the Commission, and I know we're all sorry to see you depart.

But I wanted to leverage your expertise and ask a question about what are the things you see coming down the line, down the pike, that we need to watch out for or keep an eye out for, things that are exciting or new and novel that are really things that we can be keeping an eye out for?

MR. KNAPP: Thank you, so how much time do we have?

(Laughter.)

MR. KNAPP: So, you know, at risk of leaving anybody out -- and actually it's a preview because I'm doing a session a little later on today about the very same topic.

So, just off the cuff and feeding off of what I said before about things happening, and then we think there's a Commission rule making that's finished and we're all done, I think across every sector, you're seeing new services and technologies that are being introduced.

So, in no particular order, I think you're going to see the first ATSC 3.0 television sets introduced probably next year. I expect you'll hear more about it from the Consumer Electronics Show, how that rolls out and exactly what additional services it plays for consumers. They're folks with some terrific ideas and we'll see if they take hold.

On the satellite front, there are going to be deployed massive networks of satellites for internet connectivity and for connectivity for the Internet of Things.

I was in a meeting not too long ago and, you know, having been at this for a while, I think of a satellite as a giant thing, you know, and the folks who were there said, "Do you want to see my satellite?" and I said, "You know, sure." They said, "It's in this box."

So these are the CubeSats that are small, and then they can be launched, you know, pretty economically. We've got students with terrific experiments that are going up for satellites, so there's a lot happening on the satellite front.

We've talked about 5G. I think some of the things also in that RF exposure, we made some proposals about wireless power transfer because we've got all of these devices.

It's particularly important for sensors that would be deployed for the Internet of Things and not having to go out and change batteries in them every few years, so that's a technology that's still unfolding.

The unmanned aerial systems and we're, you know, we're wrestling a little bit with some of the spectrum issues, but the benefits of it are clear for things like, you'll hear about the package delivery and so forth, and you certainly have the hobbyist sort of things, but if you have an emergency out in an area, it's a fast way to get medication to that site.

To inspect the bridges, we used to have to have somebody go there, and to be able to actually take an HD camera and get under there, tower inspections, on and on, so that's another exciting technology.

I think longer term, you're going to see more stuff on the optical side just because, you know, if you can -- what's clever about some of the things that are happening optically is the question was, well, I can have massive bandwidth with an optical connection, but if something gets in the way, it disconnects, so how do I deal with this? If you build it as a network and if one thing doesn't get through -- so some of that technology has kind of been working into its way on the satellite side.

So I'm sure I'm leaving things out, but unlicensed is going gangbusters, and WiFi. I would venture to say that we accidentally created the one technology you can use just about anywhere in the world with your same device. It just took hold.

For all of the efforts that go on, it's a desirable outcome to harmonize spectrum around the world. That's not always so easy because of the existing encumbrances and so forth. So, Wi-Fi is going gangbusters, as is Bluetooth. So I'll stop there. That should be enough.

And I do think, you know, being mindful of all of the, as the technologies come out, security, trying to build that in from the start, privacy for consumers. All of those things have to be accounted for too.

MS. CLEARWATER: Thank you.

MR. KNAPP: Yeah, good? Thank you.

CHAIR POCIASK: Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

CHAIR POCIASK: That was so interesting, so I really do appreciate that. So, I think we're ready to go. All right, so now we're going to go through a series of presentations from the Consumer Governmental Affairs Bureau, and starting us off then, we'll have Patrick Webre.

MR. WEBRE: Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the winter meeting of the Consumer Advisory Committee. And I think for those of us who live in D.C., winter may have finally arrived for us. A lot of us woke up this morning to some snow on our cars, snow on our lawns, snow on our rooftops, so I think winter is finally here.

And thank you again for being here with us this morning. You're wrapping up your 2019 work in some busy fashion today. You have a very full agenda, and I'll highlight just a few of those things.

First of all, you know, we kicked off with Julie Knapp who has been with the Commission for 45 years. He's just been a great and wonderful person to work with. I've worked with him myself for about 15 of those years, and just a really pleasant person, a person who can put very complicated topics, I think, as we know, into, you know, user friendly, consumer friendly words and expressions, and it's very helpful for us, especially those of us who are technically challenged who are not engineers, and he's been a great person.

I know he's leaving behind a good legacy here. Lots of folks that worked with Julie in the Office of Engineering and Technology will carry on his legacy, but we all wish him well and we will all miss him very much.

So, you know, it was great to hear from Julie about what's coming up in 5G, what's coming down the pike. I like to pick his brain sometimes myself about -- I keep needling him about when are self-driving cars going to get here, you know?

The drivers in D.C. are not as good as these computers could be, I think, at some point, and he's like, "It's going to be a while." He keeps, you know, toning me down a little bit, but I'm very excited about that possibility because it seems like some people don't want to drive and they'd rather be doing other things, and a lot of times, they are doing other things while they're driving.

So, after our briefing, you'll hear from Jesse Jachman. I'm sorry, first you'll hear from the Office of Legislative Affairs regarding some pending legislation. The TRACED Act is one of them. We've all heard some things about that, so you'll get an update from our Office of Legislative Affairs about that, as well as some other legislation involving consumer-related topics.

And then you'll hear from Jesse Jachman who is the designated federal officer of the Precision Connectivity Agriculture, sorry, the Precision Agriculture Connectivity Task Force. They just kicked off recently, so he'll provide a description of what precision agriculture is, its value to consumers, and an overview of the task force mission.

And then the Wireline Competition Bureau will give you an overview of the FCC's proposed three-year, $100 million Connected Care Telehealth Pilot Program.

After that, Kristi Thompson, the chief of our Telecommunications Consumer Division in the Enforcement Bureau will give you an update on consumer, current consumer scams and other related EB activities.

And then finally this afternoon, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau will cover the FCC's recent NPRM proposing some changes to our Universal Licensing System, ULS, including that all filings be made electronically.

And I also look forward to the recommendation that you'll be considering this afternoon regarding consumer education surrounding the implementation of SHAKEN and STIR caller ID authentication.

I certainly appreciate all of the hard work you've done thus far and all of the hard work yet to come. We appreciate the CAC, the CAC members, the CAC members' time, and the CAC members' input. It really matters as we work together to protect consumers.

So, as we've done in prior CAC meetings, we will, I'll introduce some of the deputies, deputy bureau chiefs, and our associate bureau chief to give you an overview of their areas of responsibility, kind of what's been going on lately in those areas. So we'll start it off with Mark Stone who is the deputy bureau chief overseeing our Consumer Policy Division.

MR. STONE: Good morning.

CHAIR POCIASK: Good morning.

MR. STONE: I would say on the topic of self-driving cars, having a daughter who just got her driver's license --

(Laughter.)

MR. STONE: -- the idea of self-driving cars sounds great. On the other hand, riding a motorcycle myself, I'm curious whether those same sort of ideas apply to motorcycles and whether that's even a possibility, so I look forward to that.

Good morning. Since your last meeting in September, my area of CGB has been busy on robocalls just as you have. As you know, the Commission in June made clear that voice providers can block calls that are likely to be illegal based on the reasonable analytics.

They do that before those sort of calls can ever reach consumer phones, and they can now do it by default, giving consumers the ability to opt out if they decide they don't want that type of blocking.

In that same action, the Commission asked if it should allow providers, voice service providers to block calls on other grounds, including incorporation of caller ID authentication metrics into their analysis.

That proceeding, as you might imagine, has garnered a considerable record, and we're working through those issues now and look forward to the next steps.

Now, that call blocking work, of course, focuses on stopping illegal calls before they ever reach consumer phones. If they do reach consumer phones, we have the Telephone Consumer Protection Act or TCPA, which we administer to address those types of calls and faxes.

So we continue to work through really big picture TCPA issues that apply to virtually all callers, but we also now have turned our attention to individual petitions that often tee up more discrete individualized questions.

And over the last week, our bureau has released two such decisions, one related to the names that businesses may use when they leave prerecorded messages on consumer phones.

That name is particular important because it lets the called party, the called consumer understand who has called, and lets them know who to contact if they want to make a do not call request or revoke previous consent to receive that call.

Our second decision related to faxes and how the TCPA's fax restrictions apply to modern technologies that don't resemble the old fax machines.

So those are just two things that we've done recently, and we know there's a number of other pending petitions before us, and we know that consumers, and callers, and faxers alike are looking forward to our guidance on that, so we're working on that.

We'll also continue our work on the Reassigned Numbers Database. You may recall that the North American Numbering Council is advising us on the details of that database, and we look forward to getting their recommendations on it, and then we, along with our colleagues and some of the other bureaus, will be putting that out for public comment, so that's something for you all to keep your eye on.

So, that's it. That's the thumbnail from where I'm at in CGB, and I'll hand it over to my colleague.

CHAIR POCIASK: Thank you. So next, we have Barbara Esbin.

MS. ESBIN: Good morning. Mark is modest. If there's one word that people associate with our bureaus, it's robocalls, and that is the man.

So, I think, as you know by this time, I oversee the governmental affairs portion of the bureau's work, the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and the Office of Native Affairs and Policy.

So this past quarter has been extremely busy for both of my groups. ONAP, in conjunction with other FCC bureaus and offices, has continued the Commission's outreach to tribes and tribal organizations, including holding tribal workshops in Albuquerque, New Mexico and in Blue Lake, California. If you don't know where Blue Lake is, it's in Humboldt County, a rather remote little reservation there.

And the Commission uses these workshops to provide presentations on a broad range of important agency programs and policies that support the deployment of communications' infrastructure and services in Indian Country.

Recent and upcoming events have primarily focused on the recently recreated Rural Tribal Priority Window for new licenses in the 2.5 gigahertz band, which has the potential to significantly increase the deployment and adoption of modern communication services on unserved and underserved tribal lands.

ONAP, together with its colleagues in the Wireline and Wireless Bureaus, made several presentations at a September National Tribal Broadband Summit, which was sponsored by the Departments of the Interior and Education and the Institute for Museum and Library Services here in D.C. Chairman Pai delivered keynote remarks at this event as well.

ONAP staff also participated in and presented at external events held by external tribal organizations, including the Internet Society's Indigenous Connectivity Webinar in Hilo, Hawaii. Actually, Patrick Webre flew the flag for the bureau at that event, self-sacrifice that he made.

(Laughter.)

MS. ESBIN: The TribalNet conference in Nashville, Tennessee and joint ONAP and Wireless Bureau outreach efforts surrounding 2.5 gigahertz have including various workshops and tribal events, including addressing the FCC's Intergovernmental Advisory Committee and participating in a number of intertribal organization events, including the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians' annual convention, Alaska Federation of Natives' corporation, National Congress of the American Indian, Alaska Telecom Association tech showcase, our FCC Native Nations Communications Task Force meeting.

We had a 2.5 gigahertz workshop on tribal lands in Gallup, New Mexico, the National Tribal GIS Conference Albuquerque, and a Bureau of Indian Affairs tribal providers conference in Anchorage, Alaska. We're definitely the traveling group, but that's not all.

In terms of policy work, ONAP staff prepared and issued a public notice seeking comment on the effectiveness of the Commission's tribal engagement guidance which seeks to facilitate dialogue between tribes and carriers, receiving high cost USF support for service on tribal lands.

ONAP also oversees the work of the Native Nations Communications Task Force. The task force met here in November, its second in-person meeting of the year, and at that time, the members finalized and adopted their first report to the Commission which identifies obstacles to greater broadband deployment and adoption on tribal lands, and offers some potential solutions.

The task force has now turned to its second task which was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Commission's tribal engagement guidance, offer us recommendations, best practices.

IGA has also been quite busy in the past few months, attending and participating in and presenting at a variety of national, state, and local government organization meetings.

I'll read the acronyms. If you don't know what one is, stop me. Otherwise, it will take a very long time. There's NATOA, NASCIO, NARUC, NASUCA, NLC, NAAG, and NCSL. That really covers the waterfront on national, state, and local organizations.

And like ONAP, IGA oversees the administration of the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee, the IAC. The IAC had its final meeting of its term here in September, and it adopted four reports, making recommendations to the Commission on how to identify state, local, and tribal regulatory barriers and incentives to telemedicine, best practices to ensure that non-English speaking communities receive emergency alerts, best practices to fine-tune state, local, and tribal coordination for disaster preparation, response, and restoration efforts, best practices for communications between state emergency managers and EAS state emergency communications committees to ensure that EAS procedures, including the initiation and cancellation of actual alerts and tests, are mutually understood.

And my final message is that the Commission has reauthorized the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee for another two-year term. We're currently actively seeking nominations from state, local, and tribal governments to serve on this committee, and I encourage you to go out into your constituent worlds and encourage good public servants to apply to work on our advisory committee. So, any questions?

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay, oh, we can get questions too at the end, after all the speakers --

MS. ESBIN: Sure.

CHAIR POCIASK: So, thank you, Barbara. I appreciate that. So, Diane Burstein, I guess you're up.

MS. BURSTEIN: Thank you.

CHAIR POCIASK: Yeah, we can get questions too at the end of all of this.

MS. BURSTEIN: Great.

CHAIR POCIASK: Thank you, Diane.

MS. BURSTEIN: Sure, good morning. I'm Diane Burstein and I am deputy bureau chief of CGB overseeing the Disability Rights Office, and I recognize many of you from that role.

I'm happy to be here today to highlight some of the key things that the Disability Rights Office has been working on since your last meeting in September.

We've taken several steps to advance the foundation of the Telecommunications Relay Services or TRS, which provides services for individuals with hearing or speech disabilities so they can engage in communications in a manner functionally equivalent to an individual who does not have a hearing or speech disability.

So, in general, on September 18, the FCC adopted an item to modernize the TRS rules by updating the Commission's definition of TRS to match the definition in the 21st Century Communications and Accessibility Act of 2010, the CVAA, and issued a further notice of proposed rulemaking looking to eliminate some outdated rules relating to equal access and multiple billing options requirements in light of changes in the marketplace.

Just a few weeks ago, in November, the Commission adopted a report in order to expand the TRS Fund contribution base for support of IP CTS, Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Service, lots of acronyms in this area.

As you may know, IP CTS is a form of TRS that permits a person who can speak, but has difficult hearing over the phone, to use a phone and an IP-enabled device via the internet to simultaneously listen to the other party and read captions of what the party is saying.

Prior to the ruling, IP CTS was funded based only in interstate telecommunications revenues. In this recent order, the Commission provides that TRS Fund contributions to support IP CTS will be calculated based on the total interstate and intrastate and user revenues of each telecommunications carrier and VOIP service provider.

This puts the fund for IP CTS on a solid footing, and the new funding approach will start with the 2020 and '21 TRS Fund year.

Also in the IP CTS area, the FCC is examining comments filed earlier this year on whether to grant applications from certain providers to begin offering IP CTS solely using automatic speech recognition, ASR technology.

Currently, IP CTS is typically provided through a combination of ASR and a person sitting in the middle of the call to revoice the conversation. The applications are seeking to provide IP CTS using ASR only.

With respect to the Video Relay Service, on October 30, CGB released an order extending the VRS at-home call handling pilot program through April 30 of next year or the effective date of an FCC decision on its notice of proposed rulemaking proposing to make this pilot program permanent.

The pilot program permits certified VRS providers to use sign language interpreters working from home workstations so long as certain rules are followed to safeguard service quality, call confidentiality, and to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

In October, the Commission also adopted a notice of proposed rulemaking to update its suspension and debarment rules, and apply these rules to TRS programs and the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program.

 Specifically, the notice proposes to adopt new rules consistent with OMB's guidance for government-wide debarment and suspension to keep fraudsters away from programs like this, and comments are being -- the comment date for that has not yet been issued.

DRO has also been active on areas related to the accessibility of video programming. In October, the FCC released its second report to Congress on video description as required by the CVAA.

The CVAA was designed to help ensure that individuals with disabilities can fully engage in communication services and equipment, and better access video programming.

The October report examines various aspects of video description, including the amount and types of described video programming, consumer usage and benefits, the costs of creating described video programming, and the need for additional described programming.

DRO in this area is also reviewing comments that were filed this fall relating to a petition submitted by representatives of the disability community on caption quality issues, including the use of ASR for captioning live programming.

Finally, the Disability Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet in February of next year where we'll be taking up additional issues of interest to consumers.

These are the key highlights, and thanks for your time this morning.

CHAIR POCIASK: Thank you, Diane.

MS. BURSTEIN: Sure.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay, and we have one more here for Ed. Here he is. Good to see you.

MR. BARTHOLME: Good morning, everyone.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: Good morning.

MR. BARTHOLME: So, I want to start by echoing some of the thank yous that you've heard earlier today.

We appreciate the time that you give to this Committee and the FCC, as well as the pace that you have been working to provide us with useful recommendations on some important consumer protection issues.

And I too look forward to your recommendation later, or upcoming later today on caller ID authentication and SHAKEN and STIR education.

A couple of quick highlights. So, as you probably know by now, I work with our Complaints Division here, our Web and Print Publishing, or as I like to call them Education Division, and our Outreach Division at the Commission.

Our Complaints Division recently signed a new call center contract that's now been awarded. So, Gettysburg is not going anywhere.

There will still be people there taking phone calls directly from consumers and helping them navigate FCC issues.

We're also about to hit the five year anniversary of our online Consumer Complaint Center later this month. It actually sort of soft launched on Halloween a little over five years ago.

And it fully launched, I believe December 20 something five years ago. James Brown, who you've heard from many times is the sort of lead in keeping that together. And we appreciate his efforts.

And many CAC members provided valuable input as that program was developed five years ago. You know, candidly I was one of the CAC members. So that's a little bit of a pat on my own back, at the time.

(Laughter.)

MR. BARTHOLME: But many of the rest of you provided input as well too.

And five years is a milestone worth noting. And we do have some things in the works for the coming months. So stay tuned on that front.

On the Education front, you heard from our expert on 5G already this morning. And you've probably seen the commercials.

And research is showing that consumers are a little bit confused about 5G. As Julie mentioned we can help clear up that confusion.

As a start, we'll be launching a 5G consumer FAQ soon. It will be part of a package of content designed to highlight the evolution of wireless communications.

In addition to the online FAQ, we plan to do a tip card and develop some outreach materials around understanding what are the G's.

Other recent posts that we've done, just in time for holiday travel, we did a consumer alert about juice jacking. It doesn't involve steroids at all.

It involves using public charging ports. So you see the little USB things in the airport and other places. You stick it in.

Scammers being an innovative lot have figured out how to load malware into those. How to get information off your devices. Or even put programs onto your devices simply by you plugging in and charging.

Our top tip on that is, just carry the wall outlet thing. Most of them are pretty small. And plug it into a wall outlet and you should be fine.

There are other innovative products that can also help protect you. Some have very intriguing names. I encourage you look into that on your own.

We did a recent post on open enrollment season scams. So, phone calls are up. Email data showing that healthcare related calls was one of the top -- was the top issue for their October report.

And we've got some great consumer education around some of the things that scammers are trying when it comes to open enrollment issues.

We have more scam posts to come. And we're looking to do more with data driven content. Including some data visualizations that might highlight some of the scam information we're seeing.

Earlier this fall we released our second in-house animated video. And it was on emergency communications.

It features a great character called Moe. I encourage all of you to check it out. But, it goes through the same tips that we include in our audio PSAs and on our consumer education portal, FCC.gov/emergency.

Things like charging your device when you know a storm is coming. Making sure that you have emergency contacts identified in your phone. Non-emergency numbers so you can call the local sheriff instead of 911, depending on the situation and what the need that you have is.

We did provide Spanish translation support for our outage reports during the California wild fires and tropical storm Dorian earlier this year.

A fun fact, our consumer guides web page monthly growth is up 5 percent from June to November. So, we're happy that we're getting increased traffic. More people are coming and checking out the great materials we have.

Along those lines, earlier -- I'm sorry, in November we launched a download-ables page. So you can now download pdf versions of all our tip cards and use them to support your efforts.

As I like to say, you've already paid for them through your tax dollars. So, you're welcome to grab them. You're welcome to use the tips.

You're welcome to take the cards and personalize them in a way that you -- that makes sense for you. But they're all now up there. And can be downloaded. And please make use of them.

We recently redesigned our Outreach web page. So if you go to FCC.gov/outreach, you can see that new fresh look. And you know, kind of poke around and find some good materials there.

The last time we were together we talked about how we were working to get Hmong versions of a lot of our content. We now have that available.

We -- we're working with our supermarket chain partner in California to get those distributed. We've sent it to partners in Minnesota and other parts of the country where there are pockets of Hmong.

And Bohdan just reminded me that we owe Milwaukee some as well. Because there's some Hmong population in that part of the country also.

As the Chairman mentioned earlier, partnership are important for our robocall work. And also all of our outreach and education work.

We launched monthly partner calls in September. And those have quickly transitioned to a webinar format.

Our December webinar was yesterday. And included a guest presenter from the National Cyber Security Alliance's Stop, Think, Connect initiative, with a focus on holiday consumer protection tips.

Last month we were guests on an FTC Facebook live that focused on military and veteran consumer topics.

We have a few guides that are focused on if you're being deployed overseas. You know, what can you do with your cell phone contract. Things like that.

We're working with USAC to do some outreach and education around the National Verifier that's rolling out across the country. We've gone some national presentations at NAG's Conference, which is the -- our partner for the supermarket program.

We exhibited at the Wisconsin State Broadcasters Association Conference, the Association of Late Deafened Adults Conference, presented at FOSI's Conference on just a couple of weeks ago here in D.C.

Did a grand opening of a new Operation Hope Center in Baltimore. And they're a great partner for us too in getting the word out about robocalls and other consumer issues.

We've also done a lot of good local events. We were able to participate in the HUD ConnectHome Summit.

And we're really excited about the potential partnership there. Because what we found is that the sort of housing leaders and the admin structure in HUD facilities is a really great consumer touch point.

They're who the people living in those buildings go to with questions and with problems. So, getting tip cards, getting information in those offices, is a great way to inform a group that may not always hear from, you know, the content that we've got out there.

Rural tours. As you know, I like to tell you about when we go places. So in September we were in Kansas and Nebraska. And as the Chairman mentioned, we were able to do an event with the Chairman in Nebraska.

We did 17 public meetings. We did nine drop offs. Got some great local media coverage. Covered hundreds of miles. Tried something called a Runza, which is a fast food place in Nebraska.

In both states we were able to have events with representatives from the State AG office -- State Attorney General's office participating.

And a big thank you to AARP for helping us to plan and coordinate the consumer facing event that we did with the Chairman in Freemont, Nebraska. Great turn out. Really good event. Really nice panel discussion in addition to some great remarks.

Upcoming rural tours. So, we are actively planning Arizona and New Mexico in January 2020. So that's coming up quickly.

The one after that will be Arkansas and Louisiana in March. So, if you have contacts, if you have members or partners in those states, please let us know. We'd be happy to work with you on a joint event.

Another thing that falls into our outreach category are actually is our 504 compliance officer and the interpreters.

So, we're really want to just say thank you to everybody who provided comments in the recent 504 proceeding where, you know, we sort of put out a refresh of the -- right. And got some feedback on what we're doing well and what we're not doing well.

Really appreciated the good feedback there. And the kind remarks that were said about the great interpreter staff that we have here at the FCC.

Coming up next, we are launching soon, and working towards getting together public facing outreach toolkits.

So the concept here is that any librarian, any you know, local senior center or other community serving institution could come to the FCC website and download everything they would need to do a presentation in their building to their audience on things like robocalls, rescanning your television for the repack, or any other relevant consumer issue.

So, hopefully those are going to be up and ready in the spring. That's our goal. And I'll probably be back here to tell you about it when it's there.

Also, keep an eye on our social media platforms. We're planning some holiday themed consumer education posts. Moe from the Emergency Communications video may make an appearance in some of those.

And stay in touch if you -- and if you're not already in touch, please reach out. If you have events we can support, let us know. Happy to participate.

And if you have ideas about education topics, we're always willing to hear those and to work with you.

So, thank you.

CHAIR POCIASK: Well, thanks Ed. So, we had a good update on the issues of outreach and scamming and complaints. And we heard from the other speakers on various topics of disability and travel issues, and so on.

So, does anyone have any questions here before we break, regarding what we've just heard from, from the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, before they leave?

So, please? Debra?

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: Yeah. Debbie Berlyn, National Consumers League. I have a question for Ed.

I was just wondering, when you were talking about the scams and work on that, I was wondering if you coordinate with the FTC, who would also have an interest in some of these same campaigns and issues?

MR. BARTHOLME: So, we do. And I think, you know, the spoofing work that we did over the past year was heavily coordinated with them.

The Facebook live that we did on military and veteran's issues is another example where there's coordination.

We do work with our colleagues over there. We have good dialog about the things that we're working on, that they're working on.

I don't -- we don't fully sort of like say, you're going to do this on Wednesday and we're going to do this on Thursday kind of thing. But there is a good back and forth.

And I think, like you said, we have joint goals when it comes to scam and fraud education on protecting consumers.

CHAIR POCIASK: All right. Any other questions? Anyone here from the Bureau? Please, Johnny?

MEMBER KAMPIS: Ed, when you say consumers are confused about 5G roll out, I'm curious what kind of things they are confused about?

MR. BARTHOLME: So, what we've seen in some recent research is that, you know, I think that there's a little bit of misunderstanding about where we're at in the deployment cycle.

So, one thing that I saw in an article recently is that a lot of consumers think that the latest version of an Apple product already has 5G built into it. Like that's just an assumption that's being made.

So, you know, it's -- you see the commercials. You kind of see the products coming out there.

And I think that there's maybe a misunderstanding about how ubiquitous it currently is. And also, our focus is really to make sure that consumers have relevant information so that they can make, you know, informed purchasing decisions so that when they're out there considering, you know, do I upgrade now, do I wait a few months to upgrade, they know what it is.

So, for example, one of the things in our frequently asked questions guide is my home Wi-Fi router says 5G in the title. Does that mean I already have 5G, right?

So it's clearing up things like that. It's a diff -- that's a different type of technology. It's not the same as the cellular 5G that we've been talking about this morning.

So just making sure that there's a good consumer base line of knowledge. It's not meant to be anywhere near as technical as the information Julie provided to you today.

We're not going to talk about which waves travel further than others. And then things like that.

(Laughter.)

MR. BARTHOLME: That's not really a consumer touch point. But there does seem to be some things out there.

CHAIR POCIASK: All right. Last chance. Any other questions here or on the phone for anyone here at the bureau? Okay. So, thank you. Thanks to all of you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR POCIASK: And we'll take -- we're going to take a short break. So let's try to get back here in, you know, 10:35.

So, let's make a quick break. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 10:27 a.m. and resumed at 10:40 a.m.)

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. We're going to start back up here in just a couple of seconds. We have a video with -- from Commissioner O'Rielly.

So, what we're going to do is we're just going to take a moment and go through and hear the message that he's given here for the CAC today.

All right. Let's get that moving. All right. Here's the video.

(Video played.)

COMMISSIONER O'RIELLY: Good morning and welcome back to the hardworking members of the Consumer Advisory Committee. I apologize for not being able to address you personally, but I have a prior speaking engagement that has kept me from meeting with you in person today.

First of all, let me extend my thanks to the members of the CAC. I have said this before, but sincerely, thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules and spending time away from your families to serve this important function.

The Commission relies on public input to make the most informed decisions possible. And the CAC serves to channel this critically important views and sentiment of American consumers on key policy matters.

I truly value your contributions to the FCC's process, even if I may not always agree on each and every substantive suggestion or recommendation.

In terms of the work facing the CAC right now, the agenda for today's meeting wasn't finalized at the time of this taping, but I suspect it involves a healthy dose of robocalls and discussions of 5G, telehealth, and future projects for the CAC.

The varied membership of the CAC will have a world of views on these issues and others. I hope you keep two thoughts in mind as you go about your work today and until we can next meet in person.

First, I consider one of your priorities to be looking out for the paying public. There are tons of groups and advocates all looking to spend more USF monies, or managing this or that initiative.

Yet no one is designated to look out for the average Americans. The ones struggling to get by in the improving but ever complex economy.

These are the people working hard to feed their families. To keep their communications service bills paid and up to date.

They do not have high-powered lobbyist advocating on their behalf. Every extra dollar taken from their household budget means something else has to give.

And every new burden imposed on the communications industry is passed onto these consumers in one form or another through higher costs, fewer services, decreased access and the like.

As you consider the important Commission matters before you, please keep this in front of your mind. You are charged with advising the Commission on behalf of the American consumer.

Second, please try to recognize the unintended consequences of government intervention and why FCC action needs to be narrowly tailored to address the immediate problems that have been identified.

Take for instance robocalls. Many robocalls are beneficial to American consumers and should not be halted or disrupted just because bad actors are abusing the network.

Absolutely we must go after the perpetrators of criminal activity and those carrying out illegal consumer practices.

But no one should want to block pharmacy notifications, doctor test results, school closings, power disruptions, and so many other good legal robocalls as a result of overly broad policy changes.

You see this exact point addressed in new legislation on the Hill. And that's why I've pushed so hard to ensure that the Commission is mindful of the far reaching impact of its actions, both positive and negative.

The CAC must do the same. If you keep these two principles in mind, look out for the little guy and be mindful of the reach of Commission actions, you'll do great service to American consumers.

Thank you so very much for your attentiveness. And I wish you well for the rest of the day.

CHAIR POCIASK: All right. Okay. Here we are. Okay, so now with that we're going to, I guess back by popular demand, you just did this the last time.

But, everyone was so interested in the topic, we thought we should do this again and get an update on the pending legislation.

So, today we have our presenter is again, Lori Maarbjerg. She's the Chief of Staff and Senior Attorney Advisor for the Office of Legislative Affairs.

So Lori, let me just turn that over to you.

MS. MAARBJERG: Great. It's so great to be back with you. I guess a long time ago one of my first bosses, I think he's a member of the Committee, Barry Umansky, said something to me once like no good deed goes unpunished.

(Laughter.)

MS. MAARBJERG: So, I don't think Barry's here today though unfortunately.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: He's on the phone.

CHAIR POCIASK: He's on the -- yeah, he's on the line.

MS. MAARBJERG: Oh, see. There you go. But I'm really glad to be here. Good morning.

I do want to correct the record from Ed's presentation. Obviously no one is from Nebraska like me. But it's not a Runyon, it's a Runza.

A Runza. It's a Runza. But, you all should go to Nebraska and try one, because they're very, very good.

But anyway. Moving on. So again, it's great to be back. And I actually have updates to give you.

So, Congress has been moving along steadily. Slowly but steadily on certain aspects of the things that I updated you on in September.

The main one being, of course, the robocall bill. And so this is just kind of the slide that I had back in September that kind of said this is what the Senate bill says. This is what the House bill says. Just a quick recap.

They weren't too far off. The Senate bill wanted to implement SHAKE and STIR specifically. Whereas the House bill originally was silent on the type of technology.

They both created an interagency working group. They both increased forfeitures for intentional violations. They both increased statute of limitations for intentional robocall violations, but they did it in a different way.

From that point on in the bills, they differed. So, there was different things between the two. I won't run though those specifically because neither one of these bills really matters anymore, because we have a compromise bill.

So, the staff had worked through the different language, and they came up with a compromise bill.

That bill passed last week in the House overwhelmingly, 417 to 3. It was a vote that they wanted to take just to show how much support there is for this bill.

So, the major provision and again, this is not everything that's contained in the bill. This is my caveat. These are just some of the things that are there.

If you really want to know, you should read the bill yourself. It's only 44 pages long.

(Laughter.)

MS. MAARBJERG: Wait until we get to the House one. I'll tell you all about that one. That was a little bit longer.

But again, it generally adopts the Senate language on STIR/SHAKEN. So, it decided to -- they decided to go specifically with that particular technology.

Part of the Senate language was that the Commission is tasked with evaluating that every three years and reporting to Congress. So if there's changes or things that need to be done differently, there is a mechanism for them to tell Congress.

Retains the language that creates the interagency working group. So that was similar and that was the same in both, so they kept that in there.

It adopts the Senate language to increase forfeitures for intentional violations. And it removes the statutory citation requirements.

So currently a citation has to be given before you can enforce. But they removed that for intentional robocall violations.

It adopts the Senate language to retain the statute of limitations as opposed to the House language, which was a little bit more broad.

So, it retains the statute of limitations for one year for general violations. But if it's an intentional robocall violation, it has a four year statute of limitations.

Now this is something that originally the House bill had three years. And now we have a four year, potentially a four year statute of limitations for intentional robocall violations.

It also adopted the House language to increase the statute of limitation for truth in caller ID violations from two years to four years.

Retains the House language on an annual report to Congress on enforcement. But a key provision of that, it does not, the language does not allow the FCC to collect additional information from providers when it has to make that report.

It retains the House language to require an annual robocall report to Congress on privately led efforts to trace back the origins of unlawful robocalls.

It maintains the House language that requires the FCC to establish a process to streamline voluntary information sharing with the FCC.

It retains the House language that requires the FCC to take final action within one year of an act meant on free robocall blocking services.

It retains the House language that requires the FCC to start proceeding -- to start a proceeding on one ring scams within 120 days of enactment. And report to Congress within one year.

And it also retains the House language that requires the creation of an advisory committee called the Hospital Robocall Protection Group.

So those are the major provisions. Like I said, there's a lot in this bill that you can take a look for yourself.

The Senate wants to pass this. It's unclear when they're going to get around to it. So, they're working really hard to figure out a time.

Senator Thune has been quoted he wanted to get it done this week. If it doesn't happen this week, they have next week.

And then we'll see from there. The end of the year doesn't really mean anything. We'll just move into the next session of this Congress and they can take it up in January if they need to. But they do want to get it done as soon as they can.

Privacy bills. I think when I was last here with you in September, we talked about how the Senate wanted to have a bill soon.

We now have two bills. And so competing measures. So again, most of this year on the Senate side, the Democrats and Republicans have been trying to work together to come up with a bipartisan bill that they could all support.

Ultimately we now have a bill that's been introduced by Senator Cantwell, Schatz, Klobuchar, and Markey. It was introduced last week. It's been referred to the Senate Commerce Committee.

It would require covered entities to provide individuals with the right to transparency regarding privacy policies, a right to delete, to correct, to control individual information. And a right to data security.

So, CEs are defined as any person or entity that is subject to the FTC act, or possesses or transfers covered data.

But there is an exclusion that for any entity that falls within the Act's definition of small business.

So there is some specific things that you would have to meet. And then those entities would be excluded from these provisions.

So, covered entities are not allowed to process or transfer covered data beyond what's reasonably necessary and limited to specific purposes that they've -- and where they've obtained express, affirmative consent.

CEs would not be allowed to condition a provision of a service or product on an individual agreement to waive privacy rights. So, you can't say, I'll give you something extra if you waive your rights.

And these provisions would supersede any state law in direct conflict, but not to be construed to limit any standing state or federal law. There's some issues with regards to a privacy law that's going into effect in California soon.

This bill also would require CEs to designate at least one privacy officer and at least one data security officer.

And then some of them would have to certify annually to the FTC that they maintain adequate controls and that they're complying with the Act.

This bill is significant in that it provides individuals with a private right of action. It provides the FTC and state's attorney generals with enforcement powers.

Requires the FTC to establish a privacy bureau within two years of enactment that is dedicated to privacy, data security, and other related issues. And gives the FTC some rule making authority to establish processes for opt out, and to identify privacy protection requirements for biometric information.

In comparison, we have a draft bill from Chairman Wicker. He has not introduced this yet, but he did release the text around the same time that Senator Cantwell introduced her bill.

Again, it would require covered entities to publish a privacy policy and make available, make that available to individuals.

In this case, CEs are defined as any person who operates in, or affects interstate or foreign commerce. There is a -- that provides for a right to delete, correct, and the portability of covered data.

But those -- that particular provision does not apply to CEs that meet the bill's definition of small business. It's the same definition in both of the bills. So this obviously is something that they had worked out, you know, working on it earlier.

CEs are not allowed to process or transfer covered data beyond what's reasonably necessary without obtaining express, affirmative consent from the individual. Again, this provision in this bill specifically does not apply to those CEs that meet the definition of small business.

It requires CEs to designate at least one privacy officer and at least one data security officer. And they have to register with the FTC each year if they acted as a data broker.

Again, it provides FTC and state's attorney generals with enforcement power. So there is no private right of action in the Republican bill. That's the major difference.

It preempts all state law. That's another difference. And supersedes any other federal law.

It requires the FTC to issue guidelines on best practices for CEs to comply with data collection minimization requirements. And it requires the FTC to issue guidance to CEs to assist with identifying and assessing vulnerabilities in data security.

It gives the FTC the ability to issue regulations on procedures for allowing consumer -- customers to provide and withdraw consent. And requirements for CEs when handling data verification requests.

Those are requirements, but on the other hand it only allows -- it allows, but doesn't require the FTC to establish regulations regarding privacy standards for the transfer of sensitive biometric information.

There's some reporting requirements for the FTC in the Republican bill. To submit to Congress an annual report in enforcement, an algorithm transparency study and report within three years, and a biannual digital content forgery reports.

So, those are the major things, the major provisions of the Senate bills. Again, we'll see in the new year if they start to take up this issue and work towards trying to come to agreement on some of these issues.

Again, on the House side, we -- last time around we had a few bills that had been introduced by various members, but not one that was introduced by the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on consumer protection.

And we still don't have a bill from that particular Subcommittee. They -- reports are that they're working on something.

Instead we have a bill that was introduced by Representative Eshoo and Zoe Lofgren, both members from California. The Online Privacy Act of 2019.

Now, I would encourage you to read this bill too. But it is 132 pages. So, that might take you a bit to get through it.

So, I condensed it down a little bit to five bullets. So obviously there's a lot of things in this bill that are not covered by this summary.

But the major provisions, again, rather than kicking this to the FTC, this bill would create a new independent agency called the Digital Privacy Agency.

And that would be charged with enforcing privacy rights and have authority to hire up to 1,600 full time equivalent employees.

It would provide individuals with the right to access, correct, delete and transfer data. To be informed if a CE has collected information. And to choose how long the data can be kept.

Covered entities are required, and again, this is a -- there's a lot longer list. These are some of the major ones. They would be required to establish the need and -- the need for and minimize the user data they collect, process, disclose, and maintain.

They are not allowed to disclose or sell personal information without explicit consent. CEs would have to use objectively understanding privacy policies and consent processes.

And they have to employ reasonable cyber security policies. And then they have a notification requirements to the DPA if there were any breaches or data sharing abuses.

The DPA would have the authority to issue regulations to implement the provisions in the bill and to issue fines for violations. It's the same amount as the FTC, $42,530 per incident.

State's attorney generals can bring civil actions under this language. It does provide an individual right to sue for declaratory or injunctive relief.

And it does allow individuals to sue for damages. But it does not allow them for class action suits.

And that's it. Easy.

(Laughter.)

MS. MAARBJERG: Easy stuff. Again, the FCC is really not involved in the privacy side of things. But, we're happy to track it and keep you all updated on it.

CHAIR POCIASK: Let me ask you a couple of quick questions. So that House bill you just looked through on privacy by the two California legislators, it doesn't preempt the bill that they have right now, do they? In California?

MS. MAARBJERG: No. No.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. So that's wrong. What about the algorithm transparency, what is that related to?

MS. MAARBJERG: Oh, gosh. See now you're asking me questions that I can't talk to.

CHAIR POCIASK: Is that like saying, like a Google would have to be transparent with its searches.

MS. MAARBJERG: I think it -- yeah. So yeah, and how -- right. And how they're using their algorithms to track and to keep track of things.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay.

MS. MAARBJERG: Yeah.

CHAIR POCIASK: Were there any questions in the room or on the phone?

MEMBER UMANSKY: Good morning. Hi, this is Barry Umansky. I'm sorry, I --

CHAIR POCIASK: Is that Barry?

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: That's Barry.

CHAIR POCIASK: Yeah. All right. Barry, can you speak up a little?

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: Yeah, we can't hear you.

CHAIR POCIASK: Hey Barry, can you speak up?

MEMBER UMANSKY: I appreciate it.

CHAIR POCIASK: Hey Barry?

MS. MAARBJERG: We'll never know. Barry was my first boss out of law school.

CHAIR POCIASK: Hey Barry, are you there? Can you speak up? We didn't get your question.

MEMBER UMANSKY: Yeah. I'm here Steve.

MS. MAARBJERG: I don't know if he's hearing us.

CHAIR POCIASK: All right.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: I have a very -- just a -- oh sure. Sorry. I was just wondering if we could get copies of those summaries of the bills. It would be very helpful.

MS. MAARBJERG: Yeah. I think you all have a copy of this.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: Oh, do we have this in our --

MS. MAARBJERG: I don't know if you have it in your folder.

MS. CLEARWATER: I don't think it's in the folder. But, we can certainly provide an electronic copy and distribute it that way to everyone.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. Were there any other questions here or on the phone? Last call. I guess we'll have you back soon enough, right?

(Laughter.)

MS. MAARBJERG: Probably, yeah. I am now a regular?

CHAIR POCIASK: I guess so. Yeah, we'll have -- we'll just give you a seat next time. Thank you Lori.

MS. MAARBJERG: Sure. Thank you.

MEMBER UMANSKY: Yeah, hey Steve?

CHAIR POCIASK: Yes?

MEMBER UMANSKY: Can you hear me now?

CHAIR POCIASK: Yes. I can hear you.

MEMBER UMANSKY: Okay. I'll yeah, I just wanted to point out that Lori, it was a great presentation.

And at this instance, your good deed is appreciated.

(Laughter.)

CHAIR POCIASK: All right.

MS. MAARBJERG: Thank you.

CHAIR POCIASK: Thank you Barry. Thanks.

(Applause.)

CHAIR POCIASK: All right. Let me just reload this here. Yes, that we're going with ag. Okay. So, next on our agenda here we have, our presenter is Jesse Jachman. He's the designated Federal Officer and attorney and advisor for Telecommunications Access Policy Division. That's the wire line bureau.

So, yep, Jesse.

MR. JACHMAN: Okay, thank you. Good morning everybody. So yes, I am -- my name is Jesse Jachman. I am the DFO, or the Designated Federal Officer for the Precision Ag Connectivity Task Force, which has a longer name, which I'll give you in a second.

And when I'm not doing my role as a DFO for the task force, I am a legal advisor. I was previously in the Telecommunications Access Policy Division.

Now I'm in the front office of the Wireline Competition Bureau as a legal advisor, and working on all aspects of the universal service fund.

So, before I get a little bit more into the task force, I wanted to just talk a little bit about what precision agriculture is. I figured that would be a little bit useful.

And for that information, I pulled some -- I pulled a document that's available online, that is made available by our counterparts at the Department of Agriculture.

And they have what's called a Case for Rural Broadband. So, precision ag technology is basically using technology to improve agricultural production.

Finding new ways or new technologies and ways of working to combine to improve yields, reduce costs, improve labor efficiency, and increase revenues through greater market access.

So, a couple of examples, common examples of precision ag technology are, you know, GPS. You use GPS technology to guide or steer your tractor in the field.

You can have sensors in the ground to monitor things like soil quality, moisture levels. And also drones. You have drones that are used to fly over large crop fields to identify pest problems and look at overall crop health.

So, how are these technologies applied to stages of agricultural management? So, as USDA describes here, there's stage one, which is the planning stage.

And these aren't all my slides, but --

CHAIR POCIASK: Oh, okay.

MR. JACHMAN: Yeah. So, I just, you know, wanted to give some background this morning on these. So you have data collection and decision support to make better choices about what, where, and when to produce using data analytics, yield prescriptions, fertility planning.

Then during the production stage, precision agriculture also comes in. Monitoring the growth cycle, managing inputs and optimizing the products. Health and harvest, you're talking about real time censoring, automated harvesting, things like that.

And then finally, there's market coordination. This is stage three that they have. Creating access to new customers and channels.

Differentiating products and shaping consumer preferences. This is online sales, targeted advertising, and optimizing distribution.

So, what are the societal benefits of precision agriculture? In other words, you know, how are these technologies going to benefit consumers?

Well, a few things that are listed here. Seven point five percent fewer people at risk of hunger in developing countries. Two seconds to trace food products using block chain enabled records.

Forty percent less fuel burn. Lower water usage or being more efficient with water, 20 to 50 percent or more. And up to 80 percent reduction in chemical applications.

So, all these are kind of the benefits of precision agriculture. But this doesn't really work. In other words to realize the benefits of precision agriculture we need connectivity on agricultural lands.

So, that's kind of where the task force comes in. And so the formal title of the committee is the Task Force for Reviewing the Connectivity and Technology Needs of Precision Agriculture in the United States.

So essentially what the task force is charged with is providing advice and recommendations to the FCC, to the USDA, and others on how to assess and advance the deployment of broadband internet access on unserved agricultural land in order to promote precision agriculture. In other words promote connectivity.

So this is actually a statutory committee. Congress directed the FCC in the 2018 Farm Bill. So this was a little less than a year ago, to establish a task force in consultation with USDA, the Department of Agriculture.

The task force is, just like they are subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act. And members have a two year term. And under the Statute the Federal Advisory Committee is going to run to the end of 2025.

So this is kind of just broad what the task force is assessed with. So it must access the current state of broadband in agricultural lands along with the broadband needs of precision agriculture technologies and agricultural lands.

So the task force is required to submit reports to the Chairman annually consistent with Sections 125.11 of the 2018 Farm Bill. So this is the section of the Farm Bill directing the FCC to establish this task force.

And so this part -- this section of the Farm Bill also lays out in detail what the goals of the task force are.

So in addition to these reports that are mandated in the Statute itself, the task force is also going to produce reports that are not expressly required by the bill, but are consistent with the duties of the task force.

So if you look at the Statute there are some duties and there are some reports. And these are the things that the task force is going to produce.

All these reports will be made public. And the task force was actually officially established just recently, December 4, 2019.

So, just a little bit about the makeup of the task force. So, as your all aware, membership balance plan is an important aspect of any federal advisory committee.

You have to have diverse point of views and everything like that. Fortunately for us, this was laid out in the Statute for us.

So, we knew exactly the kind of categories of people that were going to make up this task force. And it's an interesting group of people.

Very diverse and something that you wouldn't typically think would be coming to the FCC. So we've got to meet a really interesting group in that respect.

So we had agricultural producers representing diverse geographic areas, different types of farms. Small farmers. An agricultural producer representing tribal agriculture.

Internet service provider, fixed, mobile. And infrastructure providers as well. So you can think of tower companies.

Representatives of the electric coop industry. Representatives of the satellite industry. Equipment manufacturers, drone manufacturers, any manufacturers that are involved in precision ag technology.

Representatives from state and local governments. And representatives with relevant expertise in data, broadband mapping, geospatial analysis and coverage mapping.

And again, fairly balanced in terms of their viewpoints, technology, things of that nature.

Now the Statute also does limit us to 15 members. So you can see we had a bit of work to do on trying to figure out how do we get 15 members within that?

If you kind of add it up, it doesn't really equal 15. But we were able to get 15 members representing these different areas.

In addition to those 15 members, we do have one member of the task force, a USDA ex-officio non-voting member. So this person sits on the task force representing the USDA.

And then finally, a little bit about the working groups, which we are in the process of setting up, but we have announced what they will be.

The working groups will be the mapping and analyzing connectivity on agricultural lands. Examining the current and future connectivity demand for precision agriculture.

Encouraging adoption of precision agriculture and availability of high quality jobs on connected farms. And then finally, accelerating broadband deployment on unserved agricultural lands.

So, those are the four working groups that we have. So we actually just had our first meeting earlier this week, on Monday. And the members have been really excited to get started.

We are also in the process of standing up these working groups. We have the chairs and vice chairs of the working groups, which we announced Friday of last week on the 6th.

And the FCC and USDA teams are actively working to review applications to stand up the working groups. And so that's where we stand today.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. Do we have any questions for Jesse? All right Matthew?

MEMBER GERST: Hey Matt Gerst with CTIA. Thanks, this sounds like it's very, going to be a very interesting task force.

Particularly with the announcement of last week on the FIG fund, and how the Commission maybe thinking about allocating funding for agricultural events as well.

Two questions, when are the applications for the working groups due?

MR. JACHMAN: So the applications for the working groups were actually due December 3.

MR. GERST: So, that's closed.

MR. JACHMAN: They are. But, I think we would be willing to entertain additional applications.

MEMBER GERST: Okay. And how does the -- can you help us understand how the Farm Bill defines agricultural lands, and opposed to just general rural areas?

MR. JACHMAN: Yes. Well one thing also about the working groups, if people had already applied but weren't selected, the will also be in the running for the working groups.

So in terms of the agricultural lands, we're really -- so a lot of the things, I think, in the Statute themselves aren't necessarily answered in the Statute or defined.

And so that's -- a lot will be tasked for the task force to do and the working groups within there, are to kind of go out and figure out what, you know, what is -- what does agricultural lands mean?

So, those are things that we're looking for the task force to find. I think -- I don't have a good definition in front of me, but this is something I think we would defer to USDA on, as they are -- they keep a wealth of data and information on agricultural lands, what's cropped, what crops are planted where.

So, you can kind of think about it as at least initially possibly taking their, USDA's data on agricultural lands and somehow merging that or overlaying data on broadband deployment. And kind of getting initial sense on that, yeah.

But yes, those are all questions that the task force will look at.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. Any other questions here in the room or on the phone?

Okay, Jesse, thank you so much.

MR. JACHMAN: Thank you. Thank you for having me.

CHAIR POCIASK: All right.

(Applause.)

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. So, next we're going to get an update on the Connected Care Grant Pilot Program.

And here to present is Rashann Duvall. She's an attorney advisor with Telecom Access Policy Division with the Wireline, not wireless, Communications Bureau.

And with that, let me turn it over to you.

MS. DUVALL: Hi, good morning everyone. I'm glad to see so many familiar faces in the room. I see you guys are learning a lot. I've learned a little bit since I've been sitting back here as well.

As you mentioned, I'm Rashann Duvall. I'm an attorney advisor with the Wireline Competition Bureau Telecommunications Access Policy Division.

And I'm pleased to be here today to give you a brief overview of the -- thank you, the notice of proposed rulemaking that the Commission adopted in July for a Connected Care Pilot Program.

Many of you may already be familiar with this proceeding. And I know some of the organizations have filed comments in this proceeding as well. So we're very thankful and grateful for that always.

If you haven't had a chance to review the notice of proposed rulemaking, it is available in Docket Number WC 18-213. FCC 1964 is the document number.

And feel free to reach out to me afterwards and I can send you a link directly to the NPRM if you'd like that.

So as many of you aware, the Commission has supported healthcare providers access to communications technologies through the rural healthcare programs.

The rural healthcare support program is comprised of two distinct components. The Telecommunications Program and the Healthcare Connect Fund Program.

In July 2019, the Commission adopted a notice of proposed rulemaking that proposed and sought comment on a pilot program that would help defray eligible healthcare providers' costs of providing connected care technologies to low income Americans and veterans.

During my talk I will refer to this notice of proposed rulemaking either as the connected care notice or NPRM.

Healthcare providers are increasingly using broadband to provide connected care medical services to patients in their homes. So this is moving beyond the traditional brick and mortar facilities.

And providers are just able to do really just amazing things with these new technologies. These services however require both the provider and the patient to have connectivity.

Some examples of the types of connected care services that are being provided include video visits with physicians, as well as remote patient monitoring, which requires devices that might collect a patient's data such as, you know, a blood pressure monitor or a glucose monitor.

And then that data would, the device would collect that information and then transmit that information to medical professionals.

There are just a lot of really interesting technologies being developed in connected care services right now. And it's just really an exciting area to -- just really exciting area.

There are also a lot of growing evidence of the benefits of connected care services, including improved health outcomes and reduced healthcare costs.

The proposed connected care pilot program would actually be separate from the existing telecommunications program and the healthcare connect fund program.

By way of background, for the telecommunications program, which is one of the existing rural healthcare programs, that program was created in 1997 to ensure that eligible rural healthcare providers pay no more than their urban counterparts for telecommunication services.

As part of that program, eligible rural healthcare providers receive a discount on eligible telecommunication services, which is determined by the difference, if any, between the urban and rural rates for telecommunication services.

For that program, the supported services include, but are not limited to, traditional telephone service, voice and facsimile services.

The healthcare connect fund program is also an existing rural healthcare fund program that was created in 2012 to expand eligible healthcare provider access to broadband especially in rural areas. And encouraged the creation of state and regional broadband networks for healthcare.

Through that program, eligible healthcare providers and consortium applicants receive a flat 65 percent discount on an array of advanced telecommunications and information services, including but not limited to internet access, dark fiber, business data, traditional DSL service, private carrier services, and network equipment necessary to make the supported service function.

With the connected care notice, as I mentioned, the proposed connected care pilot would be separate from those existing programs. The connected care notice proposed establishing a pilot program with 100 million dollar budget for a three year funding period duration.

As proposed in the connected care notice, the following services and equipment could potentially be supported through that program, broadband internet access services to provide connected care services.

This would include the healthcare providers own internet access service, and internet access service that patients would use in their home or on a mobile device.

As I previously mentioned, the existing rural healthcare programs primarily focus on the healthcare providers connectivity.

So, extending it to -- allowing healthcare providers to purchase connectivity that the patient could then use at her home would be -- at their homes would then be something different from the existing programs.

For the connected care pilot program, the NPRM also propose funding network equipment necessary to enable connectivity for the purposes of connected care. And this could include things like routers and servers.

It also proposed supporting packages or suites of services that are considered information services uses to provide connected care services.

I will note that the connected care notice did not propose funding end user devices, for example, tablets, cell phones, medical devices, or mobile applications unless they were part of an information services that would be supported, or healthcare provider administrative expenses associated with participating in the pilot program.

And these are things that the Commission has not traditionally funded through the existing USF programs or prior pilots that the Commission has established.

The connected care notice envisioned that participating healthcare providers would purchase the supported services equipment. So as the notice envisions that this would be more of a healthcare provider driven type of program.

And it sought comment on whether healthcare providers should be required to competitively bid for the supported services and equipment.

With respect to eligible healthcare providers and broadband providers, the connected care notice proposed limiting the pilot program to nonprofit and public healthcare providers that fall within the following statutory categories that are currently used for the Commission's rural healthcare programs, the existing programs.

And this would be post-secondary educational institutions offering healthcare instruction, teaching hospitals and medical schools, community health centers or health centers providing healthcare to migrants, local health departments or agencies, community mental health centers, not for profit hospitals, rural health clinics, skilled nursing facilities, and consortia of health care providers consisting of one or more of the above types of entities.

The connected care notice proposed not limiting the pilot program to broadband providers that have obtained a designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier.

The connected care notice proposed giving healthcare providers flexibility to design the pilot projects. And does not propose limiting pilot projects to specific geographic areas or health conditions.

With respect to the discount level, the connected care notice proposed that participating healthcare providers will receive a flat 85 percent discount on the supported services and equipment eligible for support through the pilot program.

Healthcare providers will be responsible for the remaining portion of the costs.

The connected care notice proposed not to set a fixed number of pilot projects, or set a limit on the amount of funding that can be provided to a single project.

The connected care notice also sought comment on funding sources that eligible healthcare providers could use to pay their share of the costs.

And under this structure, I think what the notice envisions is that the healthcare provider would be receiving a discount on its bill and the service provider would be reimbursed for the eligible discounted costs.

And this is very similar to the way the funding structure currently works under the existing rural healthcare programs.

The NPRM envisions that there would be an application process for the pilot program. Healthcare providers would submit an application to the Commission that would address the various application criteria in order to participate in the pilot program, including identifying the participating patients.

And the connected care notice also sought comments on the factors that should be used to evaluate the pilot program applications.

And it also proposed awarding additional points to pilot projects that serve certain geographic areas or populations where there are healthcare disparities, for example, rural areas, tribal areas, or just healthcare providers that might be located in urban areas but might primarily serve a rural population.

And also proposed awarding additional points to pilot projects that would treat certain health crisis or chronic conditions. Some examples are opioid dependency, high risk pregnancies, heart disease or diabetes.

Finally, the connected care notice proposed and sought comment on four goals. This is improving health outcomes through connected care, reducing healthcare costs, supporting the trend towards connected care everywhere, and determining how universal service support can positively impact existing telehealth initiatives.

With respect to current status, which I know is always something that people are always interested in. So, as many of you know, in August and September, interested parties sought comments and replied comments in our proceeding.

And the official comment cycle for the connected care notice has closed at this point. We are still reviewing and evaluating the comments and reply comments.

And in terms of next steps in order to move forward, the Commission would need to issue an order for the pilot program.

And with that I'll open up to any questions anybody might have about the proposed program. Yes?

MS. CLEARWATER: Hi, this is Christina Clearwater. Can you give us an example of -- that would help us understand the difference in how this differs from the existing program?

For example, if I am a provider, sort of in a clinic on tribal lands, so what is -- what is the additional coverage that the notice is proposing?

MS. DUVALL: Sure. That's an excellent question. I think there are two things that I think the additional notice would be covering.

As I mentioned, you know, with respect to this program, it's primarily -- it's focused on connected are services. So it's that additional element of allowing the healthcare provider to purchase connectivity for the patient to also use in their homes.

So the way the current programs are structured, they will purchase the connectivity for the healthcare provider to have broadband access, but do not include anything for patients to access it at home.

So that's kind of the limit. Patients would need to go to their doctors facilities or already have their own existing broadband in order to take advantage of connected care services.

MS. CLEARWATER: So for example, if I am somebody who resides on tribal lands and I have a chronic condition like diabetes, then the medical provider would, let's say there's a device that can monitor glucose levels.

MS. DUVALL: Mm-hmm.

MS. CLEARWATER: Then the medical provider would perhaps be able to subsidize.

MS. DUVALL: Yeah. That's exactly right.

MS. CLEARWATER: Okay.

MS. DUVALL: And you know, what we're aware of is, you know, based on the record there are a number of physicians that are already subsidizing these type of things for patients with chronic conditions or low income patients already.

MS. CLEARWATER: Okay. Great. Great. That's really helpful. Thank you so much.

MS. DUVALL: Mm-hmm.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. Good question. Any other questions? Anyone on the phone? Well, great. Well, thank you so much for explaining that.

MS. DUVALL: Thank you so much. And thank you all for your time. Again, if you have any other questions about the propose pilot program, please feel free to reach out to me directly.

I'm Rashann Duvall again. My email is RashannDuvall@fcc.gov. And I'm pretty easy to find on the website. There's only two Duvall's here at the Commission.

(Laughter.)

MS. DUVALL: All right. Thank you so much.

CHAIR POCIASK: Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. Yeah. Let's just take a quick five minute break. We'll --yeah. Just real quick five minutes as we -- oh actually, we have -- we're ready to go, so.

MS. CLEARWATER: Never mind.

CHAIR POCIASK: Yeah, so we're going to get an update right now on consumer scams. Just sit right here.

And we have a presenter who is Kristi Thompson. She's Chief of the Telecommunications Consumer Division Enforcement Bureau. Here's your card.

MS. THOMPSON: I promise no one's in trouble.

(Laughter.)

CHAIR POCIASK: Yeah.

MS. THOMPSON: Except the bad guys. Except for the bad guys.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay.

MS. THOMPSON: Thank you so much for having me here. It's a pleasure to be here. I started out life as basically an antitrust lawyer in the Media Bureau.

And had no idea that I would end up a consumer protection lawyer. Although I think my standing at the Berkeley Alumni Association has risen substantially as a result.

(Laughter.)

MS. THOMPSON: So, I'm very delighted to be here. And absolutely believe in the work that this Committee does.

I was asked to give a little update on the -- on consumer scams that are going on. My favorite subject.

It is an obsession for me and my staff. And what we spend the majority of our time fighting these days as too many Americans know full well.

The big ticket item that pretty much all Americans are dealing with right now are imposter scams. Those are the worst scams happening. They have been for years.

These are primarily executed through illegal robocalls, illegal spoofed robocalls. There's an entire book of legislation that I like to throw at the bad guys.

And more legislation, I'm happy to say, has -- is coming down the pike. Frank Pallone promised that a robocall bill would be on the President's desk before the end of the year.

And I am so delighted to see that it looks like that may actually happen. Which is very exciting.

The government imposter robocalls are as we all know, for years they have been the IRS calls.

We are talking about transnational robocalling, I don't know, quasi-terrorist cells basically, operating overseas that their entire business model is to call up Americans, pretend to be some government agency, and then try to scare, cajole, convince anything, sometimes all three in the same call, Americans to give up their confidential information and provided them with financial payments that the victim does not owe to any American government agency.

MS. THOMPSON: Formally, it was the IRS. These were IRS calls you must, the messages would say things like you owe $5,000 in back taxes. If you don't contact us and call us back immediately, we'll send the sheriff to your house.

They have switched up the scam in recent, just in the past year, and now where it was the IRS, now it's a Social Security scam and it's the Social Security Administration that is learning the joys of a robocalling campaign that takes their name in vain. Now what consumers are facing are robocalls that say you owe money to the Social Security Administration or you were improperly given benefits that you don't owe. Again, there's a threat of law enforcement action, the local police or the FBI or they name any sorts of organizations will come after you if you don't pay up now.

The mechanism that they demand payment is the same, and that's not surprising because it's the same organizations, the same groups of people primarily operating out of India, who are making these calls. They've just switched up their message a little bit. So they're still demanding iTunes, payment in iTunes cards or Google Play cards or Steam cards or prepaid cards. There's an entire cottage industry of scammers that are, that are even, even have active Facebook groups where they talk to each other about this scam is working right now or, no, don't do it this way, you need to pitch it this way instead, or I'm offering to buy, you know, on ten cents a dollar all of your iTunes cards, you know, iTunes stuff that you get in and a whole network.

We expected, so two things from this. One, we are learning everyday better how to go after the entities that are responsible for these scams. And behind the scenes in ways that, unfortunately, I can't talk about or reveal publicly, we are continuing to make strides to shut down these networks. Secondly, this really illustrates, the developments over the past year really illustrate how the scammer cottage industry is very adaptive. IRS calls stopped being effective, so they switched up to the Social Security Administration, and now a new federal agency is getting up to speed just as the IRS had to get up to speed, with how to deal with that.

We expect that the scammers want to stay in business. There may be other, they may switch up again and it may not be the Social Security Administration anymore. It could be, maybe it's the Veterans Administration next. Maybe it's some other government agency. Maybe they start picking on state agencies. The point is we already predict that this may happen, and we have to be flexible and adaptive, just as they're adaptive, to move very quickly. The good news is, we are, and I'll talk about this in a little bit, we are putting structures in place to make that easier going forward so we don't have to start from scratch every time the bad guys switch up their scam.

The other major scam that is going on that a lot of Americans find baffling and somewhat frightening are what we're calling the Chinese consulate scams. If you have ever gotten a robocall where when you listen to the message the message is in Mandarin, that is a major scam that's going on. It is targeted, it is a -- they're taking a shotgun approach, so they're robocalling basically everybody, but the targets of the scam are much more narrow. They are looking for Chinese expats or the Chinese immigrant community. Interestingly enough, this scam started hitting area codes that had significant Chinese immigrant or expat populations, so San Francisco was the first identified target. After that, it moved on to New York, then D.C., and it continues to grow. Now it appears they're just robocalling everybody.

But the point or the hook in the Chinese consulate scam, the message says this is the Chinese government, you or your family owe taxes to the Chinese government. If you don't pay then your family or you may be jailed. It's apparently a frightening message, and it names a real Chinese agency that actually does police payment of taxes by foreign nationals who are living outside of the country. And the threat is very compelling. We are especially concerned about this particular threat, first because it is so evil just as a matter of principle, but then, secondly, because it has a disproportionate effect on an already vulnerable population within the United States, which is the Chinese immigrant community. We're very concerned about that. That is another major stand that we are tracking.

Again, these are scams very similar to the IRS and Social Security Administration impersonation scams that we also believe are originating outside the country. That makes enforcement challenging, but we are continuing to develop ways to shut that off.

So a little bit about -- and then, sorry, let me move on to kind of the last category of scams that we see, and those are what I call scumbag telemarketing.

(Laughter.)

MS. THOMPSON: That's the technical term for it. Right now, sort of the biggest, the biggest one of these that's happening just in the last three to four months are the healthcare scam calls where they're pitching health insurance plans, et cetera. There's been a number of press articles about this. Not surprisingly, the healthcare scams ramp up around open enrollment seasons, so while we're all kind of thinking about health insurance, we're probably getting or at least I'm getting a lot of emails from our HR departments about open enrollment on the health insurance plans. Well, the scammers know this, too, and they are timing, just like the IRS folks used to time their IRS threatening calls around April 16th and the months before that, the health insurance scammers are doing the same thing around tax time and around open enrollment season. So we're seeing spikes of that happening late in the year and then again in, like, March and April of every year. That's another thing that we are tracking.

There are a plethora of other telemarketing robocalls that happen on a more patchwork basis or sometimes a nationwide basis. I want to note that there is a significant variation in the quality of the offerings that are being pitched. Some of those robocalls are legitimate products. They're just done in a really illegal and problematic manner. Some of them are outright frauds. And it really depends on which robocall campaign you're talking about and what kind of offerings that they're discussing to tell the difference.

All of them are annoying. All of them are illegal when they're robocalls to cell phones or in other inappropriate ways or they happen without the consumer's express written consent. And no one has any sympathy for the illegal telemarketing robocallers, certainly not me and my folks.

The other major part of enforcement action that we're looking at are spoofing continues to be a problem. I've said before that spoofing is gasoline on the robocalling fire. It allows the bad guys to completely hide what they are doing or nearly completely hide. It makes it much more difficult to tell who is actually responsible for the telephone call. That is something that I know. There's another panel right after this talking about caller ID authentication, a way that we can make it much more difficult for the originator of a robocall to hide their true identity. I'm excited about it because that will also make it much easier on the enforcement side to find targets for enforcement and to take appropriate enforcement actions against them, so instead of ten cases a year we can do a hundred. That would be fantastic. Or as many cases as it takes to get the bad guys to go into a different line of business, like, I don't know, sell hot dogs or something. Something that's legitimate.

So over the past year, there have been some exciting developments in attacking these consumer frauds. We are seeing way more government cooperation, in particular between states and the federal government. My organization in particular has executed memoranda of understanding between multiple states now to cooperate on robocalling and spoofing matters. The states have significant anti-fraud and robocall little mini-FTC acts on the books that they are raring and excited to bring against violators. And we are, to put it mildly, in a target-rich environment, so maximizing the dollars spent by the government by divvying up the work among all of us who share some authority and some power to punish and deter these kinds of violations is just an exercise in good government if not just straight up mathematics.

We are also seeing significantly more industry cooperation. Long ago, more than ten years ago, some of us kind of labored in the wilderness trying to get folks to pay attention to the robocalling threat and suggest that the telecom industry in particular had a role to play in helping crack down on problematic robocalls.

For a while, there was some skepticism, but I'm here to tell you now that skepticism is gone. And what we have instead is actual commitment backed up by companies spending dollars to solve the problem and to help develop new tools that will solve the problem. That is a really good sign. There is recognition at the highest levels of the telecom entities that we deal with and regulate that combating frauds, combating telephone frauds is not only a good idea but is absolutely necessary.

We are already seeing consumer behavior change, and this probably won't be a surprise to any of you because if anyone here says that they answer telephone calls from numbers they don't recognize I will be shocked. That is a huge difference. Ten years ago, if you got a call from a number you didn't recognize, you probably picked up. Now, your voicemail gets to hear your calls, 90 percent of your calls or more. That is a significant change to consumer behavior, and whenever there's a significant change to consumer behavior it drives where the market is going. If consumers no longer value their voice telephone service, that changes and potentially threatens a lot of services and a lot of offerings that depend on voice telephone service. That's an existential threat to a telephone service company. So there's a clear understanding that this is a problem and we need to do something about it.

There has been significant investment in the authentication process, which I won't talk too much because I won't steal anybody's thunder. And there's also a greater willingness to innovate on both in terms of how they interact with us on the enforcement side and how offerings that companies make available to consumers, like blocking apps and other features of telephone service that make it easier for consumers to decide which calls they want to accept and which ones they don't. All of these are critically important protective measures that are necessary as we combat these scams.

I have said multiple times to legislative staff, to members of the public, to companies, and to advocates, there is no one solution to the robocalling and the spoofing problem. It's going to take a hundred different solutions all working together in concert to solve the problem and protect consumers. That is what makes it so difficult to clamp down, why we can't just throw a switch and block all the bad calls because, technologically and legally, it's a complex problem that requires a complex set of solutions. But we are making great progress.

We will continue to emphasize enforcement actions, taking actions against the bad guys, making examples of them. One of the things that we are trying to do is convince the scammer industry that they need to go into a different line of work and that the economics are no longer in their favor. We want to make it more costly than cost effective to engage in these kinds of scams, and we'll do that by enforcement actions, by disrupting networks, by blocking, by public shaming, by anything that we can to change the economics that this is no longer a low-risk high-reward kind of activity.

As I mentioned before, there is promising legislation that is coming down the pike that will both increase the penalties for this kind of illegal activity, make it easier to enforce, and also streamline the ways that industry and government work together to identify the culprits and put them out of business.

And I just want to end on a note of hope and talk about a completely different kind of consumer harm that was a great focus ten years ago and up until just about five or six years ago. Do you all remember, do you all remember cramming? Do you remember unauthorized charges on your cell phone bills, those 99 cent charges? Ten years ago or back in 2011, the Senate had a whole series of hearings and there was a 50-page report on the problem of cramming, and it was the major consumer protection problem of its time, and there was a recognition at the highest levels of Congress that we needed to do something about this. And I'm pleased to say that that is what we did. We went out and tackled the cramming problem, and our complaints about unauthorized charges now are a tiny trickle compared to what they were in 2011, 2012, '13, and '14. I offer this as an example that we have the same dedicated folks who worked on the cramming problem who are now working on this robocalling problem, and we have the same goal in mind which is to solve this problem and, if a new one comes up, to tackle the new one. There will always be threats to consumers. There will always be potential harms because there are always people who want to take advantage of other people. We will continue to adapt and attack those problems as they happen, but I think there is room to have hope and to be happy that we have succeeded in the past and we can succeed again.

With that, are there any questions or anything that I can talk about?

CHAIR POCIASK: Eric?

MEMBER KOCH: Thank you. Eric Koch, and thank you for an excellent presentation. I have two questions. Another one of the evil ones, and they're all evil. Maybe it's just different degrees. But another one you didn't mention is the grandchild phone call.

MS. THOMPSON: Yes.

MEMBER KOCH: And I'd like for you to talk a little bit about that one.

MS. THOMPSON: I'd be happy to.

MEMBER KOCH: And then kind of related to that is I wonder if the data actually underreports the problem due to the shame and embarrassment that victims feel, particularly elderly, and whether, you know, that data underreports that and how we go about quantifying that. And I guess it kind of comes back to education, you know --

MS. THOMPSON: Yes.

MEMBER KOCH: -- particularly America's seniors. So comment on those two things if you --

MS. THOMPSON: I would be happy to because those are things that I think about every single day. Just your first part, the grandparents scam, this is the scam where a malicious caller calls up, they target communities that have significant populations of elderly folks, but really they'll try to get anybody. And they say your grandchild -- I can say my own uncle had this happen to him, and, unfortunately, he was a victim of this scam. He got a call from someone who said your son is in Mexico and was jailed and you need to send us $500 to pay for the attorney to bail him out of jail. Unfortunately, my cousins being kind of the people that they are, this was not an entirely implausible story, I'm sorry to say. And, unfortunately, it worked. He ponied up the $500 or however much it was and then only later realized that this was a complete scam, that he had, in fact, lost his money to a scammer.

There are multiple people out there who run this scam. It is a popular scam. It has been going on for decades. Robocalling and free, not free but cheap VOIP dialing has made it easier to do and has particularly made it easier for scammers outside the country to perpetrate these kinds of scams.

So it is, to your second point about underreporting, yes, and I have a personal experience with this. You all know the story of my uncle. Not a single member of my family does because he swore me to secrecy that I should not tell my grandmother, my parents, any of his siblings or anybody else because he was so ashamed, so deeply ashamed that he, a very smart, a very smart person, college educated, prides himself on being savvy, had fallen for this scam. It was deeply humiliating to him. He's probably mortified if he knew that I was explaining that this was going on, so I'm sorry in advance. But, yes, it is a significant underreporting problem. We hear about only a fraction of the people who are victimized this way.

So what do we do about that? One thing that the Commission has done is partner with entities like AARP to do more consumer education. We are trying to convince elders in particular it's not something to be ashamed of, you didn't do something wrong. The scammer did something wrong, and if anyone should feel ashamed it's them. We're trying to spread that message as much as possible and to empower consumers who may be the victim of this particular scam to recognize the signs in advance so that they can avoid that problem altogether.

We've done significant work over the last year trying to get that message out to vulnerable populations in particular, and that continues to be a focus.

MEMBER KOCH: May I ask a follow-up?

MS. THOMPSON: Sure.

MEMBER KOCH: Thank you. Is there a role in retailer education to play in this, and are there initiatives where our big-box retailers and others, you know, might be able when somebody like your uncle shows up and buys $500 or $1,000 --

MS. THOMPSON: Yes.

MEMBER KOCH: -- worth of Google Play cards, is there some inquiry that can be made in both a legal and respectful sort of way? General question: can retailers be engaged in this?

MS. THOMPSON: Yes.

MEMBER KOCH: Because that's the payment mechanism.

MS. THOMPSON: Yes. Retailers can and, in fact, they are. There was a significant effort with CVS because so many of the victims of the IRS, Social Security Administration card, grandparent scam cards, calls, the ones that are demanding payment in these, you know, Steam cards or iTunes gift cards, there has been a significant push to entities like CVS. They're now training their cashiers and staff members to recognize the signs of a scam when someone comes up and has, you know, an armful of iTunes cards and says I need $5,000 worth of iTunes cards. Some of the companies, I understand, have started putting limits in place so, you know, maximizing, you can only do $500 maximum or $200 maximum in purchases at a time to try to slow down that process so that somebody can say, hey, wait a minute, why are you buying all of these cards? What's going on here? Who told you you needed the -- no, the IRS does not accept payment, does not accept tax payments in iTunes cards. Something that we can do to slow it down, get the victim to get out of the tunnel of what he or she has been told is going to happen to them by the scammer to step back and think about what the situation really is and question that whole process.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: Posting notices at the sales, too?

MS. THOMPSON: Yes. So we've seen notices being posted up in grocery stores, drugstores saying if someone is telling you that you need to buy a whole bunch of iTunes cards, this is a known scam, don't do it. Over-the-air announcements, you know, on the PA system as the music is playing, there's also announcements, you know, this is a scam, don't do it, et cetera. If there's new creative ways to do that, we are open to ideas, as well, and would welcome feedback from all of you if you have additional ideas that we should think about or avenues to explore.

MEMBER KOCH: And along the same lines, as a state legislator myself, any advice you have to us for state-level solutions I'd be very interested in.

MS. THOMPSON: Oh, yes.

MEMBER KOCH: Thank you.

MS. THOMPSON: Speaking as an enforcer, I'm always in favor of better enforcement tools that make it easier for -- sorry. That's my self-serving ask. So empower your state's AG offices to the extent necessary. They live with their laws inside and out. They probably have ideas for you to say, you know, how can you strengthen. That's the conversation that, you know, we and our counterparts at the FTC had at the federal level with, you know, the current legislation. The legislators came to us and said we have ideas that we want to do, let's talk about what the problems are that you see. That's a way to help.

Anything -- mostly, it's, like, attention. We need to do as much consumer education as we possibly can and reach out to consumers that maybe don't interact with the government every single day. There are willing industry participants on the telephone side that are, you know, happy to do PSAs, that are happy to do consumer outreach efforts. Organizations like AARP or other organizations that serve particularly vulnerable populations. I mentioned the Chinese expat and immigrant community. I would suggest, you know, reaching out to organizations that serve immigrant communities in particular and saying what are we doing together to get the word out about this scam and protect people? That's the kind of thing that those organizations that work with particular populations probably have some great ideas and would welcome some additional government impetus behind those ideas.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. We have time for one more, if we can get one more. Yes, make sure your hand is up, too, so we can get the mikes on.

MEMBER LONG-DILLARD: Vonda Long, AT&T. Kristi, we appreciate you, Wonder Woman.

(Laughter.)

MEMBER LONG-DILLARD: I've just got to tell you that. I have a question about, are you seeing an uptick in complaints around ringless voicemail scams? Because as, you know, implementation of SHAKEN/STIR gets closer, scammers are looking for other means of scamming people.

MS. THOMPSON: Yes, yes, they are. And the answer is yes. So those of you who may not be familiar with what a ringless voicemail is, there are some companies that have developed kind of a software technology that attempts to, that attempts to contact you on your phone. But what they're hoping to do is not actually ring your phone, they just want to drop a voicemail in your voicemail box without your telephone ever ringing.

The reason that, why would they do this? For two reasons: one, they think it's, ironically, they think it's less intrusive, and I'll talk about that in just a second; but then, secondly, what they're trying to do is avoid liability under federal laws that say you can't ring somebody's telephone, you can't call someone for a telemarketing purpose without the prior express written consent of that consumer. So their brilliant idea is, great, I'll leave them a voicemail and then I'm not actually making a call.

The problem is, and this is a message I try to communicate to companies that are looking for these kind of innovative, you know, work-around-the-law kind of solutions is that you get in trouble when you do things that violate consumer expectations. And to put it bluntly, consumers are freaked out when they get calls, when they get phantom voicemails that their phones never rang but suddenly there's a voicemail. Their first thought is this phone sucks, my service sucks, I'm not getting calls, it's dropping calls, I'm not receiving it. And then their second thought is when they realize that, no, the phone never actually rang is how do they do that? That's creepy. Who else is getting into my voicemails? I don't want this to happen.

There's a whole lot of consumer angst about this technology, so the answer to your question is, yes, we are getting significantly more consumer complaints. I also say that some of the entities that are making these kind of calls or think they have a solution are not nearly as effective as they think they are because what happens is their ringless voicemail actually rings the phone once and then it drops it into voicemail and that aggravates consumers, too.

That is a problem we are looking at. I can't comment too much more past that, but we are aware that consumers are not happy with this new thing that they're dealing with.

CHAIR POCIASK: Kristi, thank you so much. Was there anyone on the phone that had a question before we move on? Thank you so much.

MS. THOMPSON: Thank you.

CHAIR POCIASK: You can tell there was a lot of interest in that topic.

(Applause.)

MS. THOMPSON: I love my job. Thank you.

CHAIR POCIASK: All right. Well, thank you. Okay. So, Michael, so on the next, next on the agenda we have Michael Santorelli. You want me to move to the slides?

MEMBER SANTORELLI: Sure.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay.

MEMBER SANTORELLI: Am I on?

CHAIR POCIASK: Yes.

MEMBER SANTORELLI: Okay, great. Hi, everyone. So Michael Santorelli. I am co-chair of the CAC's Caller ID Authentication Working Group. My fellow co-chair, Thaddeus Johnson, I want to recognize. He's not able to be here today. He's being represented by Barbara Burton. But Thaddeus, I just want to acknowledge that he was, you know, we worked very hard together, very closely, and he was very actively involved in this process. I just want to make sure that he is acknowledged for that.

I also wanted to thank Scott and Christina for all of their help in shepherding us throughout this process. It was a good amount of work in a short period of time, but I think we came together for a good recommendation. I'm just going to run through it pretty quickly, and everyone should have a copy in their folders.

Just quickly, a review of our working group's charge. I'll just read. We were charged to develop a recommendation to address how the Commission and other stakeholders can best educate consumers about the meaning of the SHAKEN/STIR caller ID authentication framework and what are the most important factors providers should consider for displaying authentication and other information about the call to consumers.

And so just a brief overview of our efforts to get to a recommendation, a good amount of time was spent on information gathering, reviewing FCC resources, which were pretty plentiful, filings. There was a robocall summit over the summer which was very helpful. Researching the many news stories and studies and other events that have been happening on this issue. As we've heard today, it's an issue on top of everyone's minds, it seems, in this sector. And then a big part of our information gathering was hearing from a number of stakeholders who are part of this process or who are implicated by it, and that included conversations or presentations by AARP, AT&T, CenturyLink, the Secure Telephone Identity Governance Authority which actually played a huge role in developing the SHAKEN/STIR framework, T-Mobile, TNS. Thank you to Sarah Leggin from CTIA and who was instrumental in facilitating many of these presentations and also worked very hard on numerous aspects of the process, as well. So thank you, Sarah, and Vonda, as well, for facilitating the AT&T presentation. It was very much a group effort in the process.

And then just drafting, editing, finalizing the recommendation. Spent several weeks on it, had a draft, went through many changes, intense editing sessions. But we came up with, ultimately, a draft that was unanimously adopted by our working group. I think it reflected a lot of input from a host of different perspectives, so we're very happy with the outcome.

So just to run through the recommendation itself quickly. The whereas clause is the 13, excuse me, the 13 whereas clauses essentially setting out our kind of findings on the issue around caller ID authentication, framing the problem, which is, as we've heard numerous times today, unwanted robocalls facilitated by caller ID manipulation or spoofing primarily. Then teeing up the promise of the SHAKEN/STIR framework which will help combat this issue. And, again, as we've heard, this is part of a broader strategy around combating robocalls because it's an ever-mutating issue.

So SHAKEN/STIR is an industry-led standard to enhance call authentication to make sure that means by which calls can be authenticated from where they originate, as I mentioned, part of a broader strategy around combating robocalls.

The findings also include that there are some limitations, at least initially, with the SHAKEN/STIR framework as it rolls out. It will take some time to kind of be embraced broadly. Initially, it will work just on IP-based communications, so folks on legacy networks might not benefit, at least initially. And also the SHAKEN/STIR framework itself, as we heard from several of our presenters, tends to be most effective when paired with other analytics, so other kind of data-driven efforts by carriers themselves or third parties to supplement the SHAKEN/STIR caller authentication framework to help the carriers label the calls and show a consumer what is coming in, whether it's potential scam or it's verified. And carriers are kind of working through how best to present that information to their customers.

And then, finally, there is a need for and many roles for robust consumer education around the SHAKEN/STIR rollout.

And recommendations, there are six of them. And on here they're called resolve clauses just because that's where my, I always pair resolve with whereas clauses, but they're actually recommendations in the draft itself.

So our recommendations include, and I'll just kind of walk through them one-by-one just so everyone can hear it as they read along. The first recommendation is that voice service providers clearly and proactively inform and educate consumers about the caller ID-related services they offer, including caller identification, call labeling and display practices, what information call labels may convey, what action consumers should take relative to each label, the capabilities and limitations of the SHAKEN/STIR framework, and whether providers offer SHAKEN/STIR to their customers. I believe beginning this month or very soon it will start to be rolled out by a number of carriers but not everyone right away, so that's certainly relevant.

Our second recommendation is that the Commission develop web pages and educational campaigns that use simple language, visuals, and videos to provide consumers explanations of and resources on SHAKEN/STIR and the call authentication capabilities and limitations of the various voice service networks, for example IP-based communications and TDM or the traditional copper network, and links to voice service providers' websites. And the focus here is on simple language, visuals, and videos just because these are very technical-sounding models and principles, so the easier it is to convey to consumers the better just because it is kind of a lot to wrap your mind around.

Recommendation three, voice service providers maintain customer service and other resources to help consumers and call originators obtain answers to questions and resolve issues related to reports of call labeling, including potential mislabeling.

Recommendation four recommended that the Commission keep evaluating how best to encourage voice service providers to continue innovating and improving caller ID services that empower consumers with the relevant call information which may include additional information along with the combined results of SHAKEN/STIR and reasonable analytics, kind of acknowledging that this is an ongoing issue and there will be a need for continued efforts by service providers to continue responding to these malicious activities.

Recommendation number five recommending that the Commission, consumer groups, the Commission, industry, consumer groups, and other stakeholders conduct studies and solicit input on what factors voice service providers should consider for displaying caller ID information to consumers, including SHAKEN/STIR verification, caller identity information, telephone number authentication, and other information about the call. Recommended that these entities should also evaluate how consumers respond to call labeling, including whether call labels are effective at communicating the authenticated information and prompting consumer action that mitigates harms from illegal and unwanted calls. We also recommend that these entities should share the information, as appropriate, in order to come up with best practices, recognizing again that there will be any number of ongoing efforts by carriers as they grapple with these issues and so the more they can share and work together among themselves, as well as other stakeholders, all the better.

And, finally, last recommendation that the Commission continue to collaborate with industry, consumer groups, consumer advocacy groups, federal, state, and local government agencies, and other stakeholders to educate consumers about how caller ID services, consumer display practices, and other measures can respond to evolving illegal and unwanted robocaller tactics, protect consumers, and restore trust in invoice services.

So that is our recommendation.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. Before we move forward, everyone has received through email the document, and I've noticed that there's a couple of missing pages from what was in your folder. So, you know, unless, you know -- I suspect that some of you want to see the entire document. It's the same as it was emailed. So what we could do is we can take a five-minute break and have extra copies brought in, you know, if that would be helpful. Are we comfortable with just moving ahead then? Because it's the same document that was emailed. I just want to make sure. Apparently, there's a page, maybe it was a two-sided page, okay, and it was printed one-sided.

So are we okay then? I just want to make sure everyone, because we can afford a break and bring some copies in. So we're good to go? Michael, I'll turn it back over to you then.

MEMBER SANTORELLI: Okay. So with that then, I move for adoption or a vote on our recommendation. I don't know the process.

MEMBER KOCH: Move to vote.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. All right. Do we have a second?

MEMBER FOLLANSBEE: Second.

CHAIR POCIASK: There's a second there. Lynn.

MEMBER ROOKER: This is Shirley Rooker. I seconded.

CHAIR POCIASK: There we go. All right. Do we have any, anybody want to make any points, discuss any issue with the recommendation? Well, hearing none, anybody on the phone have something you want to discuss or mention in regard to this?

Okay. Hearing none, then we can move on with a vote. Do we need to take another tally? It looks like --

MR. MARSHALL: I think we have a quorum.

CHAIR POCIASK: -- we have, I think we have a quorum.

MR. MARSHALL: We had sixteen this morning when you started and two on the phone.

CHAIR POCIASK: Yes, I think we're good.

MR. MARSHALL: So it looks like we still have a quorum and we're good to go.

CHAIR POCIASK: We're good to go then.

MR. MARSHALL: All right, good.

CHAIR POCIASK: All right. So with the recommendation before you, how many are for, say aye.

(Chorus of aye.)

CHAIR POCIASK: How many opposed? Anyone online? Okay.

MEMBER ROOKER: I said aye. Shirley Rooker here.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay, Shirley.

MS. GRANT: Susan Grant said aye.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. And --

MEMBER UMANSKY: And Barry Umansky is in favor, as well.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. Abstentions? Any abstentions here, online, on the phone?

Okay. So I guess we have unanimous. Okay. So with that, the recommendation, Michael, is passed. Thank you, everyone. Congratulations.

(Applause.)

CHAIR POCIASK: We'll put this into a format, and then I'll send it along to the Commission. Thank you very much. Nice.

MEMBER ROOKER: This is Shirley Rooker. Let me just say a great big thanks to Michael and Thaddeus because you all did a bang-up job in leading this group.

CHAIR POCIASK: Absolutely, yes.

(Applause.)

CHAIR POCIASK: So great news. So that passed. And with that, let's take a break. We're going to have lunch. Again, I just want to mention a big thanks to CTIA for providing our lunch today. Thank you.

And let's see. We'll resume at 1:10. All right. We'll see you then.

MR. MARSHALL: Thanks, everybody.

(Whereupon, the above‑entitled matter went off the record at 12:10 p.m. and resumed at 1:18 p.m.)

CHAIR POCIASK: All right. So let's just get started here, and we can wrap up in just a bit. So first we'll open it up for some discussion. I just wanted to remind people of some important dates. Again, we have a special hybrid teleconference and in‑person meeting -- again, that will be February 13th from 2:00 to 3:00. Okay? And that will be for the robocall report working group.

MR. MARSHALL: Mostly teleconference.

CHAIR POCIASK: Right.

MR. MARSHALL: Unless you want to show up in person.

CHAIR POCIASK: So our next meeting here then is set, it's probably April 17th.

MR. MARSHALL: But that may move to later in the month.

CHAIR POCIASK: Yes.

MR. MARSHALL: We understand the NAB has a conference, and we're conflicting with it that day. So we may have to move that day to later April or earlier April, depending upon the facility's availability.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. And then in September there's two tentative ‑‑

MR. MARSHALL: That's looking better. Yes, that's looking better.

CHAIR POCIASK: So it's either September 23rd or September 25th. That's a Wednesday and a Friday, so those are the other tentative dates. So just make sure we have that in mind. We'll send out an email to try to confirm things.

MR. MARSHALL: Yes, absolutely.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. And also I just wanted to just open it up if anyone had any questions or any discussion. There was something that we were talking about, too, in terms of if we're trying to -- in the past we used to have a lot of working group meetings towards the conclusion, and of course people would stay around. You know, any ideas about how we might be able to keep people around longer? Would it, for example, starting these from 10:00 and going to 3:00, would that be better or worse for people? I'm just wondering, you know, what we could do to try to keep people around for the second half or shortly after lunch? Any thoughts? Any discussion?

MEMBER ZACHARY: Could it be a working lunch?

MR. MARSHALL: The problem with a working lunch is our interpreters needing time to eat, and so we really need to factor that into the process. So a working lunch is difficult.

MEMBER ZACHARY: Okay.

MR. MARSHALL: We can shorten the lunch to maybe 30 minutes or 40 minutes, but I don't know if we can work over lunch as a general rule.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay.

MS. CLEARWATER: We might be able to do a combination where we have a shorter lunch and then that second half, that half an hour, we would work maybe. That might be the compromise.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. Sarah?

MEMBER LEGGIN: I would be fine with moving the lunch just that 40 minutes later because I think that the rest of our program is pretty brief, so I think folks could maybe, because we have breakfast available until like 10:00, having lunch at 1:00 might be not so bad. Because I think it's easier for some schedules, I don't know about others, but just to carve out this full morning chunk, and then at least you have your afternoon to be able to get back to ‑‑

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. That's good, too. So if we don't have like a working group planned or something like that, then maybe what we'll do is just push the lunch out.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: Maybe not have lunch.

CHAIR POCIASK: Or not have lunch and just ‑‑

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: I mean that would save our folks money.

CHAIR POCIASK: Yes. And then we'll just ‑‑ yes. Okay. So that's a couple of ideas. So did you want to say something, too?

MR. MARSHALL: I also wanted to mention that this is the last meeting for my colleague, Christina Clearwater, as Deputy Designated Federal Officer. She's moving over and has a promotion in the Homeland Security and Public Safety Bureau as a Deputy Division Chief of Policy and Licensing, and I'm going to miss her and I know you all will, too. She's been an excellent person to work with and has brought a lot of knowledge and really commitment to the CAC, to the process, and I really do appreciate that. So good luck, Christina, on your future ‑‑

MS. CLEARWATER: Thank you, Scott.

MR. MARSHALL: ‑‑ activity, and I know you'll still be a phone call away. Once in a while, you might drop down and say hello to the CAC.

MS. CLEARWATER: Yes, absolutely. It's been a pleasure to work with all of you. I have just really been so impressed with just the hard work and the diligence and dedication that I've seen all of the members display. It's just been so rewarding and so valuable, so I can't thank you enough and I've very much enjoyed my time with the Committee. So thank you so much.

(Applause.)

MS. CLEARWATER: And on a personal note, I've so enjoyed working with Scott. He's just such a talent, and I'm really going to miss him. Thanks so much.

CHAIR POCIASK: Great. Yes, and I'm sure we'll like to have you back so we can learn about the notifications that we get both ‑‑

MR. MARSHALL: Now I've got friends in the Homeland Security Bureau ‑‑

CHAIR POCIASK: Yes, both on the broadcast and on the texting and the geotargeting and all that stuff, so we want to hear more about that, and also how you get the 4:00 a.m. calls.

MS. CLEARWATER: Yes, yes. I'm not looking forward to that portion.

CHAIR POCIASK: Well thank you so much for doing that.

MR. MARSHALL: When the wireless alerts break, they will call you at 4:00 in the morning.

MS. CLEARWATER: Oh, they will. They will.

CHAIR POCIASK: And also I don't want to just gloss over it, but what we had with Thaddeus and Michael and all the working groups, I mean I can't remember having this many sort of just complete, you know ‑‑

MR. MARSHALL: Detail and actionable ‑‑

CHAIR POCIASK: It's just hard work, you know, just getting things through. It's just been so amazing. You know, I remember in the past we go through this and you get, you know, a group of, you get your yeses and nos and abstains and all that, but this is pretty amazing, I have to say, and it reflects the really hard work that these groups are doing. And so I just wanted to recognize all of you for, you know, what you've done in the past and what you guys did over the last couple of months.

So anyways I wanted to say that. Also since we have a couple more minutes, if there's anything else that people would like to raise or anyone on the phone, any discussion items, anything else from the group here? Okay. So not hearing anything there, so let's turn it over to any comments from the public. Okay. Hearing none, so we have one last presentation, and I guess we're waiting for her just for a couple more minutes, but dealing with I guess online, electronic filing. So anyways I guess we're just on hold for a minute.

MR. MARSHALL: Don't go anywhere.

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: Just like the electronic filing system.

CHAIR POCIASK: Yes.

MR. MARSHALL: Yes, similar.

CHAIR POCIASK: All right. So we'll start with the presentation then. With no further ado, then let me turn it over to Jaclyn Rosen, Honors Attorney, Mobility Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau.

MS. ROSEN: So I'm Jaclyn Rosen. I'm an attorney advisor in the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Mobility Division, and I'll be presenting on our recent September 2019 NPRM, completing a transition to e‑filing. So first, this presentation is broken into three sections. The first is an overview of FCC licensing, the second is how licensing works, and the third is the NPRM from this past September.

So the FCC is responsible for managing and licensing spectrum for commercial and noncommercial users, which includes state, county, and local governments. In licensing the spectrum, we promote efficient and reliable access to spectrum for a variety of innovative uses, as well as promote public safety and emergency response.

In terms of wireless and public safety licensing, this includes spectrum that's used to provide voice and data services to consumers, spectrum used to fuel private systems that fuel our country's business, industrial, critical infrastructure and public safety needs, and spectrum that's used directly by citizens, which is mainly amateur radio.

So how licensing works. To obtain a license from the Commission, applicants are required to submit certain forms. Which forms they're required to submit depends on which license the applicant is seeking.

So where do they go? There's one system for licensing with wireless and public safety and then three other systems that complement our licensing activities. In the past, these forms were filed manually, but today most are filed electronically as a result of our efforts to modernize and digitize the Commission's filing and retention systems. And the NPRM from September proposes to make the vast majority of our filings electronic.

So why electronic filing? Most applications for wireless licenses are already submitted electronically, but the FCC in recent years has taken efforts to modernize our filing and retention systems by improving electronic access and digitizing our communications. And our recent NPRM furthers this in terms of wireless filings in particular.

These efforts are valuable to the public because they improve public access to data, decrease costs to consumers, improve transparency and accessibility for a variety of users, saves substantial amounts of paper annually, and improved administrative efficiency.

So an overview of the wireless licensing systems. There's one system for licensing with wireless and public safety, which is ULS, and then three other systems that complement our licensing activities which includes the Antenna Structure Registration, the Tower Construction Notification System, and E‑106 System.

In terms of trends in filing, we've noticed that in ULS the majority of applications are already required to be filed electronically, but exceptions exist. In ASR, the majority similarly are filed electronically, but applicants have a choice to file either manually or electronically. And for TCNS, it's an electronic only system similar to E‑106. So all interactions are electronic by design, but it's a voluntary system so the tower notifiers aren't required to use the system as a vehicle to fulfill their obligations.

Getting into the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking from this past September, so there's three main objectives in the NPRM. The proposed changes would first make the majority of wireless filings electronic; second, require email addresses on the applicable FCC forms; and, third, eliminate the remaining correspondence sent by mail. By facilitating the remaining steps to transition our systems from paper to electronic, we're making interaction with these systems more accessible and efficient for those who rely on them and also reduce licensees' administrative costs. The comments to this were due on October 30th, 2019, and the reply comments were due by November 14th, 2019.

So part one would mandate electronic filing. The issue that we saw was in 1998 we mandated electronic filing, but we included exceptions for some applicants, like individuals, small businesses, and public agencies that we felt lacked the resources to quickly convert to electronic filing. However, given the changes in internet accessibility and increased personal computer access, we find it unlikely that electronic filing remains infeasible or cost prohibitive. So the solution that we proposed is to eliminate the exemptions that we had in place previously.

Some of the considerations that we included in the NPRM included asking the public to weigh in on whether there's still categories of individuals or entities for which exemptions are warranted, such as small entities, individuals with disabilities, and low‑income individuals. We also sought comment on the amount of time necessary to provide filers to prepare for the transition and other implementation issues, such as handling confidential information.

The second part would be to require email addresses on forms. So it's currently optional but not mandatory for applicants, licensees, and registrants to provide an email address on the relevant forms that are submitted on these systems. Our solution would be to require inclusion of an email address on all forms on all systems. Once inclusion of an email address is mandatory, we proposed dismissing as defective an application where an email address was not included.

In terms of considerations, we asked the public to comment on how we can ensure that applicants and licensees keep their email addresses up‑to‑date, and whether we should add change of email address to the non-exhaustive list of minor modifications. We also sought comment on whether to require an email address on all pleadings related to applications and filings in these systems, and whether there's possible privacy issues related to the collection of email addresses.

Lastly, the NPRM proposes to eliminate correspondence by mail. In 2014 and 2016, the Bureau took steps to reduce the amount of paper correspondence that were generated by the ULS and ASR system. So, first, we converted official electronic records for authorizations, mailing hard copies only when an entity opted in. Second, we eliminated several categories of notices generated by these systems and sent to users by USPS. Nevertheless, thousands of authorizations and letters are still sent by USPS each year, and this is even though official copies can be accessed electronically and downloaded. In about 80 percent of these instances, you even had the email address on file.

So our solution was, as we proposed, to eliminate requests for the Bureau to mail hard copies, given that the users can access and download their official authorizations, leases, and registrations from the ULS and ASR system at any time. We also proposed to send letters electronically using the email addresses on file.

In terms of consideration, we asked the public to comment on whether the Commission should maintain an option for individuals to receive paper copies on a case‑by‑case basis, and we also asked whether the Commission's waiver process is sufficient to deal with any case‑specific needs for paper filings.

That wraps up the presentation. And if you have any further questions, you can contact me or Jessica Greffenius, who is the Assistant Chief of the Wireless Mobility Division. So thank you for your time.

CHAIR POCIASK: Okay. Are there any questions? Anyone on the phone have any questions?

MR. MARSHALL: I have a question.

CHAIR POCIASK: Yes, go ahead.

MR. MARSHALL: Jaclyn, thanks for coming in today. I really appreciate it. Just a quick question. This comes close to home. I've had an amateur radio license since 1968, and little did I ever believe, when I was scared to death going to the FCC office in Buffalo, New York to be examined by the engineer in charge for my license and all that, whether I'd ever believed I'd be working for the FCC for almost 20 years.

But anyway, the question is this -- if you know, and maybe you don't know at this granular level at this time, and that's certainly understandable --- how would an individual, for example, wanting an amateur radio license or wanting to renew an amateur radio license go about doing it? Because I'm going to have to do that in a year or two.

MS. ROSEN: We have our division chief in the back, and he can correct me if I'm wrong, ULS manages all of the license applications, modifications, renewals, so that's generally the first place to look.

MR. MARSHALL: So I would go into the ULS system and do it there?

MS. ROSEN: Yes.

MR. MARSHALL: Is that what you're telling me, you think?

MS. ROSEN: Yes.

MR. MARSHALL: Okay, okay. And then would I then -- I could then download a copy of my license then, rather than you sending me one in the mail?

MS. ROSEN: Correct.

MR. MARSHALL: Is that how it's going to work?

MS. ROSEN: Yes.

MR. MARSHALL: Okay. And if I have to take an exam, you know, and somebody has to certify, there's volunteer examiners now for amateur radio licenses, how is that going to work? And you may not know this for sure at this point, but would the examiner then have to also go online and somehow certify that I passed the test as a new applicant?

MS. ROSEN: Yes.

MR. MARSHALL: Okay, all right. Thank you.

MS. ROSEN: Thank you very much.

CHAIR POCIASK: All right. Well thank you. I appreciate that.

(Applause.)

CHAIR POCIASK: So with that, I think we've wrapped up. We have just one last thing. If there's anyone on the phone or any last questions or discussion before I move to adjourn.

Okay. And with that, so then I do just that. So I move to adjourn, and then I guess do we need a second or ‑‑

VICE CHAIR BERLYN: Second.

CHAIR POCIASK: And we're done. Thank you.

MR. MARSHALL: Thank you very much, everybody.

CHAIR POCIASK: Thanks for coming.

MR. MARSHALL: We'll send out a copy of the final recommendation.

(Whereupon, the above‑entitled matter went off the record at 1:40 p.m.)