June 7, 2024

The Room Where It Happens: *Students on this year's Foundation for Rural Service Youth Tour pose at the FCC. More than 130 high schoolers are in Washington, D.C., this week to visit our nation's capital and learn about rural broadband.*

NTCA Pushes Mapping Updates to Better Reflect State of Competition

In a **filing with the FCC**, NTCA highlighted the commission's inability to obtain an accurate depiction of the state of competition in communications markets without improvements to the Broadband Data Collection (BDC) and data the agency collects with respect to the availability of voice services.

The filing comes as the commission prepares its **Communications Marketplace Report**, a mandated effort to detail the state of competition across the industry.

NTCA shared concerns about the commission's BDC work, noting that providers can still make far-reaching claims of coverage without showing any meaningful subscription. Without changes to provide an accurate and more reliable baseline of data on broadband availability that can then be used to make informed decisions, **NTCA wrote**, assessing the state of competition in the marketplace would be challenging.

NTCA, RLEC Stakeholders Raise Practical and Legal Concerns with FCC NG911 Proposal

NTCA and a group of rural local exchange carriers (RLECs) this week continued to seek changes to draft FCC rules seeking to promote a transition to Next Generation 911 (NG911) in a **meeting with staff to Commissioner Anna Gomez**.

The discussions come as part of NTCA's response to a **FCC Notice of Proposed Rulemaking** meant to advance the transition to NG911. NTCA has long supported this transition as rural consumers will benefit from the transmission of text, photos, videos and data as part of 911 calls, yet the association also has sought to ensure that the costs of this are not disproportionately placed upon rural consumers. Previously, the association and industry partners **proposed alternative cost allocation rules** to avoid such increases and met with representatives from the offices of FCC Chairwoman **Jessica Rosenworcel** and Commissioners **Nathan Simington** and **Geoffrey Starks**, as well as the **FCC's Public Safety Bureau**.

Smart Communities: Continuing the Conversation

Last month, NTCA hosted **Smart Communities in Conversation** in Washington, D.C., to highlight locally driven initiatives that are spurring digital adoption, economic development and community engagement in rural communities.

Now, NTCA's Smart Communities program **has scheduled an interactive webinar** on June 18 to continue the conversation. Participants will hear updates on the latest program resources, learn how to use Smart Rural Community (SRC) branding and share examples of initiatives implemented in their own communities.

SIGN UP NOW

THOUGHTS FROM SHIRLEY
A Blog from NTCA's CEO

Doing the Right Thing

An NTCA Board member told me it was important to "make it a priority to find something good to engage in every year," which I thought was a great way to summarize our new collaboration with the Guardian Group, **Operation IFAST– ISPs Fighting Against Sex Trafficking**. I love finding ways for the rural broadband industry to give back to the communities they serve, and I am proud of the NTCA Board for leading the way on this important work.

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First at Bat: Secure Internet Routing

Right on the heels of the FCC adopting the **Open Internet Order** in April, in which the commission concluded the agency has authority to regulate broadband services, today the FCC

adopted a **Notice of Proposed Rulemaking** that would require all broadband providers to prepare and maintain a plan for implementing Border Gateway Protocol for their Internet Protocol addresses.

NTCA Director of Policy Tamber Ray, Blue Valley Technologies (Home, Kan.) Information Technology Director Jerry Horton and Premier Communications (Sioux Center, Iowa) Chief Technology Officer Frank Bulk **wrote a blog** detailing what that means for providers and what comes next.

READ MORE

Need to Know

NTCA **filed comments** with the FCC regarding steps the agency can take to foster consumer access to independent programming. NTCA noted that marketplace obstacles such as the use of most favored nation and unreasonable alternative distribution method provisions may hinder independent programmers from reaching consumers.

The SRC Showcase Awards are annual awards presented to SRC providers to recognize their extraordinary achievements in promoting rural broadband networks and their broadband-enabled applications in rural communities. **Applications** for the 2024 awards are due next Friday, June 14.

The FCC approved a **Notice of Proposed Rulemaking** to seek comment on changes to the rules for letters of credit required for recipients of high-cost support authorized through a competitive process.

The FCC's Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau will conduct a **voluntary Disaster Information Reporting System (DIRS) exercise** from June 10-12, 2024, to ensure communications providers can access and file reports in the DIRS system and help familiarize new employees with the DIRS reporting process.

NTCA CEO **Shirley Bloomfield** gave an industry overview at the Tennessee Broadband Association Annual Convention and Showcase in Franklin, Tenn.

NTCA Executive Vice President **Mike Romano** gave a federal update at the Oregon Telecommunications Association Annual Conference in Gleneden Beach, Ore.

NTCA Vice President of Federal Regulatory **Brian Ford** gave a federal update at the National Governors Association Broadband Leaders Workshop in Overland Park, Kan.

NTCA General Counsel and Vice President of Policy **Jill Canfield** gave a Washington, D.C., update at the New York State Telecommunications Association Annual Conference in Geneva, N.Y.

UPCOMING WEBINARS

Keeping you connected to the latest information for broadband providers.

ONLINE LEARNING + OPPORTUNITIES

Policy Talk: Mapping, Universal Service and BEAD Implementation

nrtc

Sponsored by NRTC
Thursday, June 13 | 1 p.m. ET

Join NTCA CEO Shirley Bloomfield and Executive Vice President Mike Romano for a discussion about the

association's ongoing advocacy efforts to correct data in the FCC's National Broadband Map, protect and sustain the Universal Service Fund and improve implementation plans for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program.

REGISTER

Smart Rural Communities: Continuing the Conversation
Tuesday, June 18 | 2 p.m. ET

Following a successful Smart Communities in Conversation event in Washington, D.C., join NTCA's Smart Communities program for an interactive webinar to continue the conversation. Hear updates on the latest program resources and how to use Smart Rural Community branding and share examples of initiatives you have implemented in your own communities.

REGISTER

CISA Leadership on Making Your Mark in the Industry
Presented by the NTCA Women in Telecom
Thursday, July 25 | 1 p.m. ET

Join the NTCA Women in Telecom as they host a conversation with CISA Director Jen Easterly. She will discuss her path to become director and her efforts to help women attain leadership roles, as well as the current threat environment and the role that NTCA members play in it.

REGISTER

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