

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGULATORY UTILITY COMMISSIONERS

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NARUC Sees Positives in FCC Reform Legislation, Urges Advancement on Bipartisan Proposals

WASHINGTON—The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners issued the following statement after the House of Representatives passed the Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act:

“While NARUC has not taken a position on every section in this legislation, we commend the House for moving several important reforms forward. The Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act contains numerous bipartisan proposals that will increase transparency and streamline the agency’s operations. We thank Chairman Walden and agree with him that FCC Chairman Genachowski has taken several steps to improve the way the agency functions.

“Importantly, the bill requires the FCC to release specific language in proposed rules for public comment within a reasonable timeframe. The legislation also makes the important work of our several Federal-State joint boards and conferences far more efficient, allowing us to address critical consumer issues in a more timely fashion. Both of these sections are bipartisan and signal an opportunity to improve the FCC’s operations, an opportunity that should not be missed.

“As the Senate considers this legislation, we suggest that they include new language allowing FCC commissioners to appoint an engineer or computer science professional on their staff so they can provide expert counsel on the many technical issues before the agency. In addition, the Senate should incorporate proper forbearance modifications eliminating the “deemed granted” provisions in current law. These additions would strengthen an important piece of legislation, and we stand ready to work both chambers if the bill moves forward.”

--NARUC President David Wright of South Carolina and NARUC Committee on Telecommunications Chair John Burke of Vermont

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NARUC is a non-profit organization founded in 1889 whose members include the governmental agencies that are engaged in the regulation of utilities and carriers in the fifty States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. NARUC's member agencies regulate telecommunications, energy, and water utilities. NARUC represents the interests of State public utility commissions before the three branches of the Federal government.

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