



N A R U C  
National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners

March 22, 2010

The Honorable Rockefeller  
Chairman  
Committee on Commerce, Science  
and Transportation  
254 Russell  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Commerce, Science  
and Transportation  
560 Dirksen  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**Re: The FCC Commissioners' Technical Resource Enhancement Act (S. 2881)**

Dear Chairman Rockefeller and Ranking Member Hutchison:

On behalf of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), I am writing to express our support for the *FCC Commissioners' Technical Resource Enhancement Act (S. 2881)*. Senator Snowe's bill would allow each FCC Commissioner to appoint to its staff an engineering or computer science professional to provide expert counsel on technical matters before the agency.

NARUC represents the government experts from each of your States, U.S. Territories, and the District of Columbia on, among other things, telecommunications utilities. These public utility commissioners know and understand local markets and conditions. They are well positioned to gauge the impact of federal policy changes on communications services, siting, and deployment. They share your desire for your constituents to benefit from reliable and ubiquitous telecommunications.

At our Winter Meeting in February 2009, NARUC adopted a resolution concerning *Reform of FCC Management Processes* (text of resolution attached). The resolution, among other things, points out that proposed rulemakings and orders have demonstrated that the Commission needs enhanced capabilities in certain functions such as finance and engineering. Further, the resolution "encourages the Commission to consider enhancing its capabilities and analysis in finance and engineering."

NARUC is committed to working with the FCC and Congress to ensure all Americans have access to high-quality communications services at competitive prices. The recent release of the National Broadband Plan by the FCC establishes a blueprint for major reform of communications policy. It is estimated that the FCC will launch forty or more proceedings on a wide range of issues as a result of the plan. With such major policy issues coming before the FCC in the next year or two quick passage of S. 2881 is critical. The bill would only help the FCC Commissioners as they grapple with the complex issues it has and will have before it.

If you have questions about NARUC's positions or would like to discuss it further, please contact NARUC Legislative Director Brian O'Hara at (202)898-2205, [bohara@naruc.org](mailto:bohara@naruc.org) or NARUC General Counsel Brad Ramsay at (202)898-2207, [jramsay@naruc.org](mailto:jramsay@naruc.org).

Sincerely,

David C. Coen  
President, NARUC

cc: Members of the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee

### ***Resolution on Reform of FCC Management and Process***

**WHEREAS**, The advent of a new Administration under President Obama and the upcoming appointment of new FCC Commissioners have created the atmosphere for much-needed reform at the Commission; *and*

**WHEREAS**, On December 12, 2008, NARUC's President Frederick Butler sent a letter to then President-elect Obama's transition team outlining in detail specific reform proposals for FCC process and procedure, which the Telecommunications Committee supports; *and*

**WHEREAS**, On January 26, 2009, Acting Chairman Michael J. Copps announced to the staff of the Commission initial reforms in three broad areas signaling a more inclusive management style, including increasing cooperation among the Bureaus and enhancing communication among the five Commissioners' offices; *and*

**WHEREAS**, NARUC believes that such management reforms of the Commission present an opportunity to improve not only the internal decision-making processes and the quality and sustainability of the orders of the Commission, but also the collaboration and communication with NARUC and its member commissions; *and*

**WHEREAS**, NARUC has previously, through resolution, expressed its concern relative to the excessive use of forbearance petitions; *and*

**WHEREAS**, Several members of the current Joint Boards have expressed concern with the process for referrals, deliberation, decision-making and budget constraints affecting these Joint Board matters, and believe that improvements should be made; *and*

**WHEREAS**, Recent proposed rulemakings and orders have demonstrated that the Commission needs enhanced capabilities in certain functions such as finance and engineering; *now, therefore be it*

**RESOLVED**, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), convened at its 2009 Winter Committee Meetings in Washington, D.C., recognizes and applauds the initial reforms that Acting Chairman Michael J. Copps has announced; *and be it further*

**RESOLVED**, That NARUC encourages the Commission to make greater use of fact-based inquiries or adjudications and to adopt a timetable in which the Commission takes final action on matters; *and be it further*

**RESOLVED**, That the Joint Board process for referrals, deliberation, and decision-making and the budget constraints affecting these matters be reviewed on an expedited basis; *and be it further*

**RESOLVED**, That NARUC encourages the Commission to consider enhancing its capabilities and analysis in finance and engineering; *and be it further*

**RESOLVED**, That NARUC supports continued efforts by the Commission to foster cooperation with State commissions in traditional areas of joint authority and jurisdiction such as interconnection responsibilities and obligations, consumer protection, E911 and public safety, and universal service.

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*Sponsored by the Committee on Telecommunications  
Adopted by the Board of Directors, February 18, 2009*