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For Immediate Release**FCC Takes Major Step in Review of Competition in \$40 Billion Special Access Market**

Washington, D.C. (September 17, 2015) – Taking the next major step in its review of competition in the marketplace for special access services, the FCC’s Wireline Competition Bureau, on behalf of the Commission, will start to make industry data gathered earlier this year available for public review, pursuant to the terms of a protective order safeguarding competitively sensitive information.

Special access is a wholesale data service widely purchased by businesses and institutions that provides dedicated, guaranteed transmission of high volumes of critical data. The FCC has been [collecting data](#) with which to analyze the state of competition in the special access market, which has annual revenues of approximately \$40 billion.

Members of the public authorized under the protective order will soon be contacted by [NORC at the University of Chicago](#) to enable review of the data. The data is housed in a secure data enclave hosted by NORC, a public policy research institution, and will be accessible remotely as well as through NORC’s facilities in Bethesda, MD.

To assist in its own analysis of the data, the FCC has contracted with Boston University Professor of Economics Marc Rysman, who will provide advice and produce a White Paper examining the nature of competition and marketplace practices in the supply of special access services. Professor Rysman, who just completed a visiting scholar program at Harvard, is a leading practitioner in empirical industrial organization, specializing in issues of network effects, two-sided markets, standardization and compatibility, notably in telecommunications.

We note that a number of objections were filed to the initial group of individuals seeking access to the collected data. The objections were largely against the release of data regardless of the non-disclosure restrictions contained in the Bureau’s protective order released in October 2014, to which no party sought review or reconsideration. No access will be provided to the data of those filers that objected until their objections are resolved.

The Bureau’s procedures, as set forth in the protective order and implemented at the secure data enclave, are designed to protect the commercially sensitive information collected while still allowing interested parties to review the data and participate in the underlying rulemaking proceeding.

Finally, in two related public notices also released today, the Bureau announced more individuals seeking access to the collected data, and extended the comment and reply comment deadlines for the special access rulemaking to November 20 and December 11, 2015, respectively. The

deadlines had been September 25 and October 16, 2015.

Public Notice Extending Comment Deadlines:

http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-15-1037A1.pdf

Public Notice Listing More Individuals Seeking Access to Data:

http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-15-1038A1.pdf

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).