

Before the  
Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20554

CC Docket No. 87-124

In the Matter of

Access to Telecommunications  
Equipment and Services by Persons  
With Disabilities

**ORDER GRANTING MOTION FOR  
EXTENSION OF TIME TO FILE COMMENTS**

Adopted: January 17, 1996; Released: January 17, 1996

By the Deputy Division Chief, Network Services Division, Common Carrier Bureau:

Comment Date: January 29, 1996

Reply Comment Date: February 29, 1996

1. On November 28, 1995, the Commission adopted a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* (NPRM), FCC 95-474, released November 28, 1995, seeking comment on proposals to increase access by persons with hearing disabilities to telephones in workplaces, confined settings and hotels and motels. Public notice of this action appeared in the Federal Register on December 12, 1995. See 60 Fed. Reg. 63667 (1995). Comments were initially due to be filed by January 12, 1996 and reply comments by February 16, 1996. On January 11, 1996 the Commission extended the comment filing date from January 12, 1996 to January 16, 1996, due to a weather emergency and a budget-related shutdown of the Commission. See Public Notice, DA 96-2, Procedures For The Filing of Documents That Were Due During The Government Shutdown Or During The Weather Emergency, released January 11, 1996.

2. On January 11, 1996, the Commission received a request from the Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA) to extend the deadline for thirty days for filing comments and reply comments. In its request, TIA states that it needs additional time to contact FCC staff to obtain clarifications regarding technical proposals, and circulate comments among TIA members, but that TIA has been unable to do this because of the government shutdown and the weather emergency.

3. As set forth in Section 1.46 of the Commission's Rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.46, it is Commission policy that extensions of time not be routinely granted. We find, however, that TIA has shown good cause for the grant of additional time to file comments and reply comments in this proceeding. The technical proposals in the NPRM are critical to the proposed expanded access by persons with hearing disabilities to telephones in workplaces, confined settings and hotels and motels. Furthermore, TIA and its members are uniquely qualified to comment on these technical proposals, since TIA represents many telecommunications manufacturers.

4. TIA has requested a thirty-day extension, however, and we consider such an extension unnecessarily long. Except for the technical proposals, the proposals in the NPRM were thoroughly discussed by the Hearing Aid Compatibility Negotiated Rulemaking Committee. Furthermore, we understand that TIA will be able to circulate the NPRM's technical proposals among its members electronically, and we believe this process can be completed in substantially less time than thirty days.

5. We agree, however, that the public interest would be served by granting an extension of time in which to file comments and replies to the NPRM. Accordingly, we will grant the requested relief in part.

6. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED that the Request for Extension of Time filed by the Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA) IS GRANTED to the extent indicated herein, and IS OTHERWISE DENIED.

7. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the date for filing comments to the NPRM in this proceeding IS EXTENDED to January 29, 1996, and the date for filing replies IS EXTENDED to February 29, 1996.

8. This action is taken pursuant to authority found in Sections 4(i) and 303(r) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. §§ 154(i) and 303(r), and Sections 0.204(b), 0.291 and 1.46 of the Commission's Rules, 47 C.F.R. §§ 0.204(b), 0.291 and 1.46.

9. For further information concerning this proceeding, contact Greg Lipscomb, Network Services Division, Common Carrier Bureau, (202) 418-2340.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Linda B. Dubroof  
Deputy Chief, Network Services Division  
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