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For Immediate Release**FCC Unveils Consumer Broadband Labels to Provide
Greater Transparency to Consumers**

Labels Will Help Consumers Make Informed Broadband Purchasing Decisions and Serve as a Safe Harbor Format for Meeting Transparency Rule Requirements

WASHINGTON, April 4, 2016 – The Federal Communications Commission today announced new broadband labels to provide consumers of mobile and fixed broadband Internet service with easy-to-understand information about price and performance. These labels should help consumers make informed decisions about the purchase of broadband service.

FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler, joined by Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Director Richard Cordray, unveiled the new broadband labels today at an event attended by members of the FCC’s Consumer Advisory Committee. This committee, composed of consumer group and industry representatives, made a unanimous recommendation of the labels’ framework.

“These labels provide consumers clarity about the broadband service they are purchasing, not only helping them to make more informed choices but also preventing surprises when the first bill arrives,” said Chairman Wheeler. “Customers deserve to know the price they will actually pay for a service and to be fully aware of other components such as data limits and performance factors before they sign up for service.”

“Consumers deserve to know before they owe, with clear, upfront information about the prices, risks, and terms of the deal,” said Director Cordray. “Broadband is quickly becoming a necessary part of everyday life for millions of consumers. I commend Chairman Wheeler and the FCC for bringing new transparency to the broadband market, which will help people understand what they are getting before they sign up.”

The consumer broadband labels will provide consumers with more information on service speed and reliability and greater clarity regarding the costs of broadband service, including fees and other add-on charges that may appear on their bills. The FCC’s Open Internet transparency rules require broadband Internet access service providers to disclose this information to consumers in an accurate, understandable and easy-to-find manner. These formats, while not mandated by the agency, are recommended by the Commission and will serve as a “safe harbor” to meet those requirements.

The Consumer Broadband Labels will include:

- Price: Price points, including various charges that seem confusing to consumers like overage, equipment, early termination and administrative fees.

- Data Allowances: This is the carrier-defined plan limit after which consumers will face some consequence, such as additional charges or slowed data speeds.
- Performance: Broadband speed and other performance metrics.

The FCC receives more than 2,000 complaints annually about surprise fees associated with consumers' Internet service bills. The actual prices paid for broadband-related services can be as much as 40 percent greater than what is advertised after taxes and fees are added to a bill, according to consumer complaints to the Commission. With the average monthly cost of broadband service ranging between \$60 and \$70, consumers deserve to know what they are going to get for their money.

In the *2015 Open Internet* rules, the FCC asked its Consumer Advisory Committee “to recommend a disclosure format that should be clear and easy to read – similar to a nutrition label found on food items – to allow consumers to easily compare the services of different providers.” Today's mobile and fixed broadband labels reflect the committee's expert guidance on the content of these labels and in a consumer-friendly format.

Chairman Wheeler thanked the Consumer Advisory Committee for its hard work and collaborative efforts that resulted in today's announcement. He also thanked Director Cordray and his staff at CFPB for their support.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is the first federal agency dedicated to protecting consumers in the financial marketplace. The Bureau has considerable experience designing disclosures for financial products that use clear language to inform consumers, including its “Know Before You Owe” [campaign](#), which now includes mortgages, student loans, prepaid cards, and more. Upon the Commission's request, the CFPB provided the FCC with suggestions on the design and content of the consumer broadband labels. The CFPB and FCC have also partnered on enforcement actions to protect consumers.

With the release of today's Public Notice, the FCC is officially endorsing the use of the consumer broadband labels as a safe harbor for the format of the required disclosure to consumers prescribed in the transparency rule. The labels will officially operate as a safe harbor after the Office of Management and Budget gives final approval of the enhancements to the transparency rule adopted in the *2015 Open Internet Order*—though providers may choose to use the labels for disclosure to consumers at any time.

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