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For Immediate Release**FCC STRENGTHENS WIRELESS EMERGENCY ALERTS
AS A PUBLIC SAFETY TOOL**

WASHINGTON, September 29, 2016 – The Federal Communications Commission today adopted rules to update and strengthen Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), a system that delivers critical warnings and information to Americans on their wireless phones. The updated rules are intended to promote the wider use and effectiveness of this lifesaving service, especially for state and local authorities to convey important information to their communities.

Since its launch in 2012, WEA has informed the public about severe weather, missing children, and other emergencies through alerts to their wireless phones. Now that stakeholders have four years' experience with the service, and in light of its real-world use and technological advancements since the FCC adopted technical and procedural requirements for WEA in 2008, the agency has updated its rules.

In a Report and Order adopted today, the Commission took action to improve WEA message content, help ensure that the messages reach only those people for whom an alert is relevant, and establish a WEA testing program that will improve the effectiveness of the system for public safety officials and the public. The updated rules will:

- Increase the maximum length of WEA messages (from 90 to 360 characters) for 4G LTE and future networks;
- Require participating wireless providers to support inclusion of embedded phone numbers and URLs in all WEA alerts, including WEA AMBER alerts, which will enable the public to click to see a photo or to call authorities;
- Require participating wireless providers to deliver the alerts to more granular geographic areas;
- Create a new class of alerts (“Public Safety Messages”) to convey essential, recommended actions that can save lives or property (e.g. emergency shelter locations or a boil water order);
- Require participating wireless providers to support transmission of Spanish-language alerts; and
- Make it easier for state and local authorities to test WEA, train personnel, and raise public awareness about the service.

The Commission noted the public safety benefits of including thumbnail-sized photos and symbols in Wireless Emergency Alerts and, in an accompanying Further Notice of Proposed

Rulemaking, sought comment on how to achieve this in Public Safety Messages in particular.

The Commission also proposed and sought comment on additional improvements to WEA, including how to provide emergency managers with the ability to send multilingual alert content (in addition to Spanish) and measures to improve consumer education about WEA.

Today's action is designed to ensure that WEA keeps pace with evolving technologies and empowers communities to initiate these lifesaving alerts.

For more information on Wireless Emergency Alerts, visit www.fcc.gov/guides/wireless-emergency-alerts-wea.

Action by the Commission, September 29, 2016, by Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 16-127). Chairman Wheeler, Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel and Pai approving. Commissioner O'Rielly approving in part, dissenting in part. Chairman Wheeler, Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel, Pai and O'Rielly issuing separate statements.

Docket No: 15-94

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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. Cir. 1974).