

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

In the Matter of )  
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Structure and Practices of the Video Relay ) CG Docket No. 10-51  
Service Program )  
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**PURPLE CALL FORWARDING PETITION FOR CLARIFICATION OR WAIVER  
COMMENTS OF SNAP TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INC.**

Snap Telecommunications, Inc. (“Snap”) hereby files its response to the Commission’s Public Notice (“Notice”)<sup>1</sup> seeking comment on Purple Communications Inc.’s Petition for Clarification or Waiver of FCC Rule §64.613(a) to allow it to implement a call forwarding service for its users. Snap supports Purple’s petition, but instead of granting a provider-specific waiver, Snap requests that the Commission waive the rule for all VRS providers to allow server routing of video calls and the IP addresses of provider servers to be entered into the iTRS database to enable the innovation of features and services which will help close gap with the Americans with Disabilities Act’s (“ADA”) functional equivalence mandate.<sup>2</sup>

It is Snap’s experience that server based routing is necessary to enable video devices and programs to optimally function and to be fully interoperable when placed in service behind network firewalls or in secure environments. Snap has had discussions with many entities – businesses, workplaces, Congress, federal and state governmental agencies, educational

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<sup>1</sup> CG Docket No. 10-51, DA 1253 (rel. July 2, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> Section 225 of the Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. § 225(a)(3).

institutions and others – which were engaged in a prolonged grappling with trying to place video devices and programs within their secure networks, which could be resolved by using server routing. In a great majority of cases we are aware of, these entities have yet to install video devices or programs. This lack perpetuates an unacceptable failure to accommodate the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals, leading to their lesser employment, economic, recreational and other opportunities which hearing people routinely access through their telecommunications. Server routing acts as a gateway to permit communications to those devices or programs which otherwise would be blocked by a network firewall. Entities have informed Snap that server routing would satisfy their network security requirements. Snap has a server based routing solution ready **today** to provide to federal and state governmental agencies and businesses who have requested it as the only acceptable means of installing video phone technology in their network systems.

In addition, server routing would help promote interoperability between provider devices made available to VRS customers, a problem which has caused intense customer frustration in not being able to reliably connect in a way that hearing people are accustomed to with their different devices. This issue has caused many customers to abandon newer devices which employ more efficient technology and has had the effect of sustaining the monopoly of a provider who has not provided forward compatibility for the dominantly used video phone in the VRS marketplace. With server routing, the provider server operates as a “bridge” between video phones which inefficiently or unreliably engages in direct-device routing with other video phones or VRS providers, by converting or supplying protocols and signals as necessary to ensure interoperability.

Server routing is in widespread use and is a standard routing method for VoIP connections and elsewhere in telecommunications to enable certain features and quality services used by hearing people in their telecommunications. Server routing will enable providers to develop and deploy an extensive range of services, features, and protections not available with direct-device routing, but commonly available to hearing people such as call forwarding. The Commission has permitted server routing for IP relay for this very reason.<sup>3</sup>

Snap agrees that the concerns about server based routing in breaching consumer privacy or degrading the quality of their calls can be effectively dealt with through the application of Consumer Proprietary Network Information (“CPNI”) rules and enforcement against providers which engage in that type of conduct. Snap also agrees that deaf consumers should have the ability to make decisions about the breadth of their telecommunications experience by choosing to opt in or out of server routing enabled features in a functionally equivalent manner as voice telephone users. By permitting server routing, the Commission not only empowers relay consumers’ self-determination and self-directed use of telecommunications, but also regulates the issue consistent with its ADA statutory mandate to “encourage...the use of existing technology and . . . not discourage or impair the development of improved technology.”<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, Snap has been shown by another provider credible documentation of at least one certified provider using variations of server routing for its product and service offerings. Informal conversation with Commission staff indicates their awareness of ongoing provider use of server routing. This has led to an unfair competitive advantage unique to

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<sup>3</sup> *E911 Requirements for IP-Enabled Service Providers*, WC Docket No. 05–196, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 23 FCC Rcd 11591, at 11613, para. 51 (June 24, 2008) (server routing enables a “wide array of IP-based text communications applications, services, and user identifiers that can be used for the leg of an IP Relay call between the Internet-based TRS user and a CA.”).

<sup>4</sup> 47 U.S.C. Section 225(d)(2).

providers currently using server routing. Snap calls on the Commission to immediately level the playing field in this regard by waiving the rule and allowing for server routing.

The Commission has the authority to waive rules for good cause<sup>5</sup> and has done so for certain telecommunications relay services (“TRS”) mandatory minimum standards.<sup>6</sup> A waiver of Rule §64.613(a) to permit server routing and addressing is plainly in the public interest for the reasons stated above and should be granted.

Respectfully submitted,

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July 16, 2010

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<sup>5</sup> See 47 C.F.R. § 1.3

<sup>6</sup> See, e.g., *Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities*, CG Docket No. 03-123, *E911 Requirements for IP-Enabled Service Providers*, WC Docket No. 05-196, Order (June 30, 2010).