

An order of this magnitude on USF Reform surely has important pieces buried in the text, so I and public interest advocates will reserve final judgment until we've had time to analyze the full item. We're glad the Commission didn't rubber-stamp the industry-authored ABC plan, but the agency missed a historic opportunity to bring pro-consumer reform to a system that has been plagued with waste and abuse for decades. The Commission should have used this rule-making to establish meaningful oversight mechanisms to ensure subsidies are being directed to places they are truly needed, and aren't being used to pad industry profits.

Despite a lack of meaningful evidence to justify a rate increase, the Commission's move will allow carriers to impose new charges on local phone subscribers. The Commission did take steps to narrow the scope of these rate increases, but asking consumers to pay more into a broken system and letting the industry divvy up the pot will not increase broadband adoption. If the goal is to increase broadband adoption, prices should be going down, not up.

On the FCC's decision to seek comment on modernizing broadcast disclosure and public file rules, I'd like to add the following:

We're well into the digital age yet broadcaster public reports are still buried in paper files stacked in basements, instead of online where the public can more easily access them. And broadcasters continue to rely on an outdated system of reporting that falls short of providing the public with useful information on the local TV stations licensed to serve them.

The Commission has a critical opening to practice what it preaches when it comes to transparency, modernization and access to data. By updating broadcasters' reporting requirements and putting them online for easy access by viewers, the FCC could significantly improve consumers' ability to hold broadcasters accountable for whether they're using the publicly owned spectrum to serve and inform their communities. We are encouraged by the FCC's pledge to move swiftly on implementing these much-needed reforms and we will hold it to this commitment.