

I. Meeting Packet



State of Florida
Public Service Commission
INTERNAL AFFAIRS AGENDA

Tuesday – March 24, 2026

9:30 AM

Room 105 – Gerald L. Gunter Building

1. Draft Ex-Parte Comments in Response to the Federal Communications Commission's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to Modernize Telecommunications Relay Service (Attachment 1)
2. Legislative Update
3. General Counsel's Report
4. Executive Director's report
5. Other Matters

BB/aml

OUTSIDE PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION ON
ANY OF THE AGENDAED ITEMS SHOULD CONTACT THE
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AT (850) 413-6463.



Public Service Commission

CAPITAL CIRCLE OFFICE CENTER • 2540 SHUMARD OAK BOULEVARD
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-0850

-M-E-M-O-R-A-N-D-U-M-

DATE: March 13, 2026

TO: Braulio L. Baez, Executive Director

FROM: Office of Industry Development & Market Analysis (Williams, Fogleman) *CH*
Office of the General Counsel (Imig) *SPS*

RE: Draft Ex Parte Comments in response to the Federal Communications Commission's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to Modernize Telecommunications Relay Service.

CRITICAL INFORMATION: Please place on the March 24, 2026 Internal Affairs.

COMMISSION APPROVAL OF EX PARTE COMMENTS IS SOUGHT

On November 21, 2025, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to initiate a comprehensive proceeding to modernize telecommunications relay service (TRS).¹ In this NPRM, the FCC seeks comment on various aspects of the relay services, including terminating the mandatory status of analog Teletypewriter (TTY) relay.

The FCC recognizes six relay types, three analog and three Internet-based services. States have oversight of the three analog relay services (TTY relay, Speech-to-Speech relay, and Captioned Telephone Service), while the FCC has jurisdiction over the three Internet-based services (Internet Protocol relay, Video Relay Service, and Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Service).

Currently, states that choose to have their own intrastate relay programs are required to offer TTY and Speech-to-Speech relay. Captioned Telephone Service is an optional service that was discontinued in Florida due to declining usage.² In this NPRM, the FCC seeks comment on ending the requirement that analog TTY relay services must be offered by state programs. Analog Speech-to-Speech relay would still be required. The FCC asserts that this would afford states the flexibility to adapt their programs to local needs and technological realities. The FPSC's existing contract with T-Mobile includes analog TTY relay service through March 2028.

Chapter 427, Florida Statutes (F.S.) does not specifically require the Florida Telecommunications Access System to offer analog TTY relay. However, Section 427.708, F.S., does require certain public safety and health care providers to purchase and operate

¹ FCC, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 25-79, CG Docket Nos. 08-15 and 03-123, released November 21, 2025, <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-25-79A1.pdf>, accessed on November 25, 2025.

² Docket No. 20240043-TP

Draft Ex Parte Comments
March 13, 2026

Telecommunications Devices for the Deaf (TDDs). TTYs and TDDs are terms that describe the same device.

Below are key issues addressed in the proposed ex parte comments to the FCC:

- Functionally equivalent solutions should be available before eliminating the analog TTY relay mandate
- Some states have legislative mandates and contract obligations that can impact program changes and timelines
- The effectiveness of state equipment distribution programs
- The potential of unintended consequences of establishing a single national analog relay provider in states that retain their own relay program

Attachment A of this memorandum provides a detailed overview of the NPRM. Attachment B is staff's draft ex parte comments.

Attachments

cc: Adria Harper, General Counsel
Mark Futrell, Deputy Executive Director, Technical
Apryl Lynn, Deputy Executive Director, Administrative

Overview of FCC's 2025 Relay Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

Background

Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 authorizes, but does not require, states to establish their own telecommunications relay service (TRS) programs, subject to approval and certification by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).³ If a state does not have an FCC-certified TRS program, the provision of intrastate TRS in that state falls under the direct supervision of the FCC. According to the FCC, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and several U.S. territories currently have FCC-approved TRS programs. State TRS programs contract with either Hamilton Relay or T-Mobile Accessibility, who provide analog relay services for intrastate, interstate, and international calls. They seek reimbursement for intrastate analog TRS calls from the relevant state program and seek reimbursement for interstate and international calls from the FCC.⁴

The interstate costs of analog TRS are recovered through the FCC-administered TRS Fund, and the FCC determines how providers of interstate TRS shall be compensated. Since 2007, compensation rates for interstate calls using analog services have been established by applying the Multi-State Average Rate Structure methodology, which does not require a calculation of costs or demand for these specific services.⁵

Terminating Mandatory Status of TTY Relay

Teletypewriter (TTY) is widely acknowledged to be an outdated technology. Over time, the use of analog TTY relay has declined greatly, reflecting a shift towards Internet-based TRS solutions, such as Internet Protocol (IP) relay, Video Relay Service, and IP Captioned Telephone Service (CTS). Given the ongoing technology transition to IP-based networks, and the obsolescence of analog TTY relay, the FCC seeks comment on terminating the mandatory status of analog TTY relay for state-based TRS programs.⁶ Specifically, the FCC seeks comment on the administrative and financial implications for state programs if analog TTY relay is no longer mandatory, and how terminating the mandatory status of analog TTY relay would impact state programs' ability to continue supporting other essential relay services.

Alternatives to TTY Relay

The FCC asserts that the transition to IP-based networks is rendering some services such as traditional analog TTY relay increasingly obsolete. It notes that 25-years ago, Internet-based relay services like Video Relay Service using specialized videophones were considered cutting-edge technology. Video Relay Service was hailed as a significant development, offering functional equivalency for native sign language. Over the past decade there has been widespread adoption of a variety of consumer video conferencing tools, such as FaceTime and Zoom, and the Video Relay Service program's growth rate has remained mostly stable.

³ 47 U.S.C. § 225(f).

⁴ 47 U.S.C. § 225(d)(3)(B).

⁵ FCC, Report and Order and Declaratory Ruling, CG Docket No. 03-123, FCC 07-186, released November 19, 2007.

⁶ 47 CFR § 64.603(a).

Other advances in technology have created significant opportunities to upgrade and modernize IP-based TRS to expand its reach and improve quality. According to the FCC, developments in Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) technology has the potential to be superior to and more efficient than Communications Assistant (CA)-assisted IP CTS. ASR-generated captions for IP CTS are approaching, and in some cases exceeding, the accuracy of human-assisted captioning, while offering advantages in speed, privacy, and significantly lower operating costs.⁷ The FCC has certified several IP CTS providers that rely solely on ASR, fostering increased competition and consumer choice, and has implemented differentiated compensation rates for ASR-only and CA-assisted IP CTS.

The FCC recognizes that analog TTY relay usage is diminishing, but some people with speech or hearing disabilities still rely on these devices. The FCC states that these individuals should not be left without an effective means of telephone communication. As a result, the FCC seeks comment on how analog TTY relay users can be most efficiently transitioned to alternatives.

Captioned Telephone Service and Alternatives

The FCC's NPRM notes that as the telecommunications infrastructure continues its transition from analog to IP-based networks, the usage of analog CTS has steadily declined. IP CTS users can access captions on a variety of devices that connect to the Internet, including specialized IP CTS equipment or commonly available off-the-shelf devices such as computers, tablets, or smartphones. In the absence of a mandate, the FCC has observed that many states have chosen to discontinue their analog CTS services in response to declining demand. The FCC seeks comment on the extent to which ASR functionalities on smart devices are comparable in quality and speed of captions currently offered through Fund-supported IP CTS providers and whether such services present a viable and efficient alternative for users transitioning from analog CTS.

In FPSC Docket No. 20240043-TP, the Commission did not include analog CTS as a required service to include in the request for proposals. Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc. (FTRI), the distributor of relay equipment in Florida, demonstrated that it was possible to use a wireline connected tablet that provides the functional equivalency of CTS through ASR functionalities.

Prevalence of Equipment Distribution Programs or Assistive Technology

The FCC seeks comment on the prevalence of state equipment distribution programs or assistive technology programs for people with disabilities. Specifically, the FCC asks for information about the types of equipment provided under these programs; how eligibility for the programs is determined; the number of programs that have adopted income limits, fiscal caps, or other restrictions on access; the extent to which these programs are connected to state TRS programs; and whether changes to the services that state TRS programs are required to provide would affect these programs.

Transitioning Analog Relay Users to Alternatives

The FCC acknowledges that there may be some analog TRS users who, for various reasons, cannot successfully transition to IP-based telephony solutions without additional assistance. The

⁷ FCC, Report and Order, Declaratory Ruling, FNPRM, and NOI, CG Docket No. 03-123, FCC 18-79, released June 8, 2018, ¶¶ 50-51.

FCC seeks comment on the number of such individuals, the reasons they are unable to transition, and what means are available to ensure that such individuals remain able to communicate after the retirement of the copper facilities serving them.

The FCC also seeks comments on whether there are specific roles that state relay programs and communication service providers should fulfill to assist users who wish to transition to an alternate TRS service (e.g., IP CTS, IP relay, or RTT-based relay service) but may require new communication services or equipment due to network changes or device obsolescence.

Temporarily Certifying an Analog Relay Provider on a National Basis

To ensure the continued availability of TRS to those users who may still be served by analog telephone facilities, the FCC seeks comment on whether to establish a temporary national certification process for providers of analog TTY and STS relay. The FCC asks if a national certification process for analog TTY and STS providers should mirror the federal certification framework already in place for Internet-based forms of TRS.⁸ The FCC states that it believes such an approach would help ensure that the diminishing number of users still served by copper facilities are not left without recourse if the state chooses to discontinue the provision of analog TTY relay or terminates its TRS program before all users in the state have access to Internet-based forms of TRS. The FCC also seeks comment on this specific assertion.

Residual State Programs

The FCC has previously indicated that states are not precluded from funding and administering any form of intrastate TRS, including Internet-based TRS. The FCC seeks comment on the extent to which States plan to continue supporting any forms of TRS once the telephone network has fully transitioned from analog to IP technology. The FCC acknowledges that some states, leveraging their intrastate TRS funds, have expanded their offerings beyond analog TRS services to address the evolving communication needs of their residents. Many states, including Florida, operate telecommunications equipment programs supported by intrastate TRS funds.

Requiring user registration, verification, and call detail records requirements

Internet-based TRS providers seeking compensation from the federal TRS Fund must submit Call Detail Records (CDRs) to the TRS Fund administrator for each call for which compensation is sought. The data submission requirements are designed to ensure effective oversight, fund administration, and accountability. They also enable the determination of a TRS Fund budget for each service, as well as the determination of provider compensation rates. Analog TRS currently lacks comparable user registration and centralized verification processes.

To strengthen integrity and promote consistent oversight across the TRS program, the FCC proposes requiring all TRS providers to submit comprehensive CDRs to the TRS Fund administrator. This would include providers of traditional analog services and any future TRS offerings, such as IP STS and Real-Time-Text based relay service. It would also apply to all intrastate and interstate TRS calls and minutes, even if those minutes are not currently compensated by the federal TRS Fund. The FCC states that this measure would strengthen the

⁸ 2000 TRS Order, 15 FCC Rcd at 5154-56, paras. 22-27; 2002 IP Relay Declaratory Ruling, 17 FCC Rcd at 7784-87, paras. 15-26; 2006 IP CTS Declaratory Ruling, 22 FCC Rcd at 390, para. 25.

FCC's ability to combat waste, fraud, and abuse, ensuring that all services supported by the TRS Fund operate with enhanced accountability. The FCC also seeks comment on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of clarifying that all TRS providers must meet these CDR requirements, detailing any unique technical or operational challenges for specific services that receive compensation from state TRS programs.

Obsolete Rules and Inactive Dockets

The FCC proposes streamlining its regulations by removing obsolete rules and closing inactive or duplicative dockets.

DRAFT

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

In the Matter of)	
)	
Telecommunications Relay Services and)	CG Docket No. 03-123
Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals)	
with Hearing and Speech Disabilities)	CG Docket No. 08-15
)	
Speech-to-Speech and Internet Protocol (IP))	
Speech-to-Speech Telecommunications Relay)	
Services)	

**EX PARTE COMMENTS OF
THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

CHAIRMAN GABRIELLA SMITH
COMMISSIONER GARY F. CLARK
COMMISSIONER MIKE LA ROSA
COMMISSIONER BOBBY PAYNE
COMMISSIONER ANA ORTEGA

March 24, 2026

Introduction

These Ex Parte Comments are in response to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to initiate a comprehensive proceeding to modernize telecommunications relay service.¹ The comments address issues that the Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC) believes are of critical importance to states and the deaf and hard of hearing community. The FPSC acknowledges that the use of analog TTY relay has declined, reflecting a shift towards Internet-based relay solutions. Given the ongoing technology transition to Internet Protocol (IP) networks, and the obsolescence of analog TTY relay, we acknowledge that changes are inevitable. However, the FPSC believes that there remains a need for analog TTY relay until viable alternatives are available to all deaf and hard of hearing consumers. We further believe states must play a major role during the transition, and the unique characteristics of state programs must be taken into consideration.

The FPSC encourages the FCC to consider the following:

- Functionally equivalent solutions should be available before eliminating the analog TTY relay mandate
- Some states have legislative mandates and contract obligations that can impact program changes and timelines
- The effectiveness of state equipment distribution programs
- The potential of unintended consequences of establishing a single national analog relay provider in states that retain their own relay program

¹ FCC, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 25-79, CG Docket Nos. 08-15 and 03-123, released November 21, 2025, <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-25-79A1.pdf>, accessed on November 25, 2025.

Terminating Mandatory Status of analog TTY relay

States are permitted but not required to establish, administer, and fund their own relay programs. Given the technological shift from analog to IP-based relay solutions, the FCC seeks comment on terminating the mandatory status of analog TTY relay for state programs. The FCC also states that it believes this would allow states to adapt their programs to local needs and technological realities. Currently, state programs must offer analog TTY and Speech-to-Speech (STS) relay to obtain FCC approval.

The FPSC agrees with the FCC that analog TTY relay is an outdated technology. Use of analog TTY relay has declined significantly as consumers have shifted to Internet-based relay solutions, such as IP Relay, Video Relay Service, and IP Captioned Telephone Service (CTS). However, T-Mobile, Florida's current TRS provider, commented in this proceeding that "more than half of T-Mobile's relay usage continues to come from callers who rely on traditional wireline TTY services." These comments are evidence that consumers continue to use analog TTY relay services. This includes consumers who have limited access to broadband or mobile service, as well as those who use equipment obtained through authorized programs that may face financial or practical challenges in switching to newer technologies.

The FPSC agrees with the comments of National Association for State Relay Administration (NASRA) and the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Association (TEDPA) that the FCC should ensure that functionally equivalent solutions are fully available before eliminating the analog TTY relay mandate. Many consumers still rely on wireline analog TTY relay because it remains the most accessible and reliable option. NASRA and TEDPA also note that broadband deployment, particularly in rural and underserved areas, remains incomplete.

Some consumers lack broadband or mobile connectivity. Others may face financial or practical barriers to adopting newer technologies, particularly where state equipment distribution programs are limited. In addition, some users prefer familiar technology, are unaware of alternatives, or may find transitioning difficult. Although analog TTY relay use continues to decline, removing the mandate does not address the needs of remaining analog TTY relay users.

Rather than relying on a fixed transition date, the FPSC supports an approach that ensures the availability of affordable broadband to relay users before ending state analog TTY relay requirements.

In addition, consistent with comments filed by the Missouri Public Service Commission, the FPSC supports state flexibility regarding state relay program administration during the transition. The FPSC believes the FCC should not impose a uniform approach to relay programs across the country. We agree with the Missouri Commission that not all state relay programs are the same. States have varying legislative mandates and contract obligations that may impact program changes and timelines.

Prevalence of Equipment Distribution Programs or Assistive Technology

The FCC seeks comment on the prevalence of state equipment distribution programs or assistive technology programs for people with disabilities. Specifically, it requests information on: (1) the types of equipment provided; (2) eligibility criteria; (3) whether programs impose income limits, fiscal caps, or other access restrictions; (4) how these programs are connected to state relay programs; and (5) whether changes to required relay services would affect them.

The FPSC believes the FCC should continue to support state equipment distribution programs (EDP) to ensure that consumers have the devices needed to transition from analog relay to other IP-based alternatives. Florida has taken proactive steps to address the shift from analog to digital technology and to provide deaf and hard of hearing consumers with modern alternatives.

In response to the declining CTS minutes of use and the lack of competitive bids for CTS in Florida's 2024 Request for Proposals (RFP), CTS was not included in the 2025 contract. To address this gap, Florida began distributing the XLC8GLT Deluxe captioning device before discontinuing CTS. This landline device includes a large captioning screen and allows the customer to view larger captions on the screen via a pre-installed application.

In 2025, the Florida Legislature amended the Telecommunications Access System Act (TASA) to expand its EDP to include advanced technologies, such as tablets and mobile devices.² These amendments authorized the distribution of newly defined specialized communications technology and required the FPSC to set eligibility requirements. Section 427.704(e), F.S. mandates that the eligibility requirements be based on income qualifications of no less than double, but no more than triple, the federal poverty level, or participation in other state or federal programs based on income.

On December 2, 2025, the FPSC adopted rules implementing the statutory changes. Under the new rule, income eligibility was set at less than 250 percent of the federal poverty level. Consumers can also qualify through participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, or by receiving either a Veterans Pension or Survivors Pension from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The inclusion of alternative CTS equipment in 2024, and 2025 statutory changes to modernize TASA are steps Florida has taken to meet the evolving needs and preferences of consumers served by the State's program during the technological transition. The FPSC remains committed to serving Florida's deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, and speech-impaired community.

Temporarily Certifying an Analog Relay Provider on a National Basis

While states are allowed to establish, operate, and support their own relay programs, they are not required to undertake this responsibility. The FCC seeks comments regarding establishing a temporary national certification process for providers of analog TTY and STS relay if a state chooses to discontinue its relay program. In Florida, TASA requires the provision of a telecommunications relay service system, and currently there are no plans to discontinue Florida's relay program.³

If the FCC were to adopt a national certification process, Florida agrees with the comments filed

² See 2025-148, Laws of Florida.

³ Section 427.702(3)(b), F.S.

by Hamilton Relay, Inc. in support of an approach that would allow multiple providers to compete on a national basis. Rather than designating a single national analog relay provider, Hamilton recommends allowing any provider currently authorized to offer analog relay to operate on a nationwide basis. Multiple national providers would promote redundancy, enhance reliability, and foster competition.

Florida, consistent with the approach of many other states, issues a RFP for analog TTY relay and STS. Having multiple proposals submitted in response to an RFP has proved beneficial in allowing the FPSC to evaluate price, service standards, and quality. The establishment of a single national provider for states that opt to discontinue intrastate relay service raises concerns about the ongoing health of the market. Currently, there are only two intrastate providers of analog TTY relay: T-Mobile and Hamilton. If the FCC selects only one default national provider, the unsuccessful bidder may be discouraged from remaining in the market. As a result, that company may be less likely to compete in states such as Florida that intend to continue operating their own intrastate programs.

Conclusion

The FPSC urges the FCC to adopt a phased, flexible transition framework that will ensure relay users retain access to critical services during the transition. Functionally equivalent solutions should be available before eliminating mandatory analog TTY relay. Broadband availability and affordability are central issues to consider in determining when to end the analog TTY relay mandate. In addition, many states, like Florida, have legislative mandates and contract obligations that should be considered prior to any transition. Regarding the establishment of a national analog relay provider, we support allowing any provider currently authorized to offer analog relay to operate on a nationwide basis, as opposed to establishing a single winner that could disrupt the relay service market.

II. Outside Persons Who Wish to Address the Commission at Internal Affairs

Note: The records reflect that no outside persons addressed the Commission at this Internal Affairs meeting.

III. Supplemental Materials for Internal Affairs

Note: The records reflect that there were no supplemental materials provided to the Commission during this Internal Affairs meeting.

IV. Transcript

BEFORE THE
FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

PROCEEDINGS: INTERNAL AFFAIRS

COMMISSIONERS
PARTICIPATING: CHAIRMAN GABRIELLA PASSIDOMO SMITH
COMMISSIONER GARY F. CLARK
COMMISSIONER MIKE LA ROSA
COMMISSIONER BOBBY PAYNE
COMMISSIONER ANA ORTEGA

DATE: Tuesday, March 24, 2026

TIME: Commenced: 9:30 a.m.
Concluded: 9:50 a.m.

PLACE: Betty Easley Conference Center
Room 105
2524 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Gerald L. Gunter Building
Tallahassee, Florida

REPORTED BY: DEBRA R. KRICK
Court Reporter and
Notary Public in and for
the State of Florida at Large

PREMIER REPORTING
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA
(850) 894-0828

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Good morning, everyone. I
3 shall open this Internal Affairs.

4 We -- so the song that was playing, Wichita
5 Lineman, Thelma Crump brought that, or suggested
6 that song. I thought, one, that's a wonderful
7 song, but also two weeks ago, March 13th, FMEA
8 hosted, in Tallahassee, the 25th Annual Linemen
9 Competition at the Apalachee Regional Park. I
10 heard it was a huge success, and so thank you.
11 That was a very appropriate song for the timing and
12 everything too.

13 Our other most important thing that we do --
14 or one of the most important things we do at the
15 Internal Affairs is recognize our Employee of the
16 Month. So for the month of March, Kate McClelland.
17 Is she here? Yes, she's here.

18 (Applause.)

19 CHAIRMAN SMITH: So Kate came to AFD as a
20 supervisor of the rate filing section from the
21 Division of Economics, where she shined as an
22 analyst. In her time at the Commission, she has
23 shown stern determination to her work and to
24 gaining as much knowledge about our industries and
25 their regulation as possible. Her energetic

1 approach to learning and service has made a
2 positive impact at the Commission. Kate's
3 attention to detail and positive attitude make her
4 worthy of Employee of the Month, and she's a true
5 asset to the division and to the Commission.

6 So everybody, again, thank you to -- thank
7 you, Kate, for all of your hard work.

8 (Applause.)

9 CHAIRMAN SMITH: And thank you for being here.
10 Sorry to embarrass you, but you deserve it. You
11 deserve this.

12 Okay, I think with that we are going to go
13 into the Draft Ex-Parte Comments in Response to
14 FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to Modernize
15 Telecommunications Relay Service.

16 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

17 Good morning, Commissioners, Curtis Williams
18 with IDM staff.

19 Item number one are draft ex parte comments in
20 response to the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
21 to Modernize Telecommunications Relay Service.

22 The draft comments recommended that functional
23 equivalent solutions should be widely available
24 before the existing analog relay mandate is
25 eliminated. They also note that state legislative

1 mandates and contractual obligations impact
2 proposed changes.

3 The comments propose the designation of a
4 single national default provider and recommend that
5 any current intrastate analog relay provider be
6 authorized to offer service in default states.

7 Finally, the comments also --

8 COURT REPORTER: Excuse me, Curtis. Can you
9 please turn on your mic?

10 MR. WILLIAMS: Oh.

11 COURT REPORTER: Thanks. Sorry. Thank you.

12 MR. WILLIAMS: Do I need to start at the
13 beginning?

14 CHAIRMAN SMITH: It's green? Okay. Sorry, I
15 can't see.

16 MR. WILLIAMS: Finally. The comments offer
17 details regarding Florida's recent decision to
18 expand its equipment distribution program.

19 Staff is seeking Commission approval to submit
20 these comments to the FCC and request editorial
21 authority to make minor corrections as needed.

22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Williams.

24 Commissioners, do you have any questions about
25 the proposed comments to be submitted?

1 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: I have a quick
2 question.

3 I would love and support, you know, what you
4 are saying. Do you know how many other states are
5 participating? I know you mentioned -- you
6 reference, I think in here Missouri, if other
7 states are taking a similar approach and offering
8 comments to the FCC.

9 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, there are about five or
10 six states, California, Tennessee, Missouri,
11 Maryland.

12 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: Okay.

13 MR. WILLIAMS: You know, we have the -- our
14 national association NASRA, National Association of
15 State Relay, and they actually took the lead early
16 on. They actually, you know, met with the FCC and
17 communicated with the FCC. We participate in that
18 organization. You know, it's similar to NARUC --

19 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: Sure.

20 MR. WILLIAMS: -- it's the telecommunications
21 relay version. So we are a member and we have a
22 staff -- I represent our staff on that --

23 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: Excellent.

24 MR. WILLIAMS: -- committee. And NASRA took
25 the lead, and they formulated comments. They

1 shared their thoughts with the states, and their
2 comments are consistent with ours and most of the
3 other states.

4 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: Okay. Is there
5 expectation of when the FCC would make decisions,
6 or when they would go into rulemaking?

7 MR. WILLIAMS: I can't answer that.

8 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: The unknown, your
9 expression was enough. I got it.

10 MR. WILLIAMS: I can't say.

11 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: Okay. Perfect. Thank
12 you. Appreciate it.

13 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Any other comments?

14 All right. I will just say I think -- I
15 appreciate you guys putting this forward and for us
16 submitting this, and making -- I know you worked
17 with my office for making a couple of very minor
18 tweaks, because otherwise very straightforward.
19 And I am glad that we are putting our voice in. I
20 think we have a lot of residents in Florida who use
21 this technology, and so making sure that their
22 voices are heard, so thank you for doing this.
23 Appreciate it. Yeah.

24 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay. We will move to

1 Legislative Update, Mr. Frank.

2 COMMISSIONER ORTEGA: I'm sorry, do we need to
3 vote?

4 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Oh, yeah. I am sorry. We do
5 need to vote on that. Thanks, guys.

6 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: Motion to approve.

7 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah. Okay.

8 COMMISSIONER ORTEGA: Second.

9 CHAIRMAN SMITH: All those in favor?

10 (Chorus of ayes.)

11 CHAIRMAN SMITH: All right. So the comments
12 are approved, and thank you for submitting them. I
13 am sorry, I'm -- there is something as pregnancy
14 brain, and it is affecting me.

15 Mr. Frank, good morning.

16 MR. FRANK: Thank you, Chairman. Good
17 morning, Commissioners.

18 I want to beginning just turning it over to
19 Brian. He is going to give you a quick update on
20 the budget and the bills from the session.

21 Brian.

22 MR. ARROYO: Good morning, Commissioners.

23 This session adjourned on March 13th without
24 passage of the budget. The budget is expected to
25 be taken up on special session mid, sometime

1 mid-April. A total of 237 bills were voted this
2 session, and when the bills are sent to the
3 Governor outside of session, the Governor has 15
4 days to sign, veto or allow it to become law
5 without signature. At this time, the Governor has
6 signed three bills into law, six are waiting his
7 action, and 235 are waiting presentation.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. FRANK: Thank you, Brian.

10 So as Brian noted, there is more than 200
11 bills still waiting to be presented to the Governor
12 for signature. Of those bills, highlight real
13 quickly. Of those bills, there is three I would
14 like to highlight real quickly that I have been
15 tracking throughout session.

16 SB 44, the data centers. Since my last
17 update, there was an amendment to that bill which
18 removed the directive for Commission rulemaking,
19 and it did move up the timeline for when tariffs
20 must be filed. Public utilities must file
21 compliant tariffs with -- for Commission approval
22 by October 1st, 2026.

23 Next, House Bill 1451. This bill revises the
24 requirements for municipal utilities providing
25 service outside their boundaries, including how

1 rates and charges are applied and reported. By
2 March 31st, the Commission would have to compile
3 information submitted by these utilities and
4 provide a report to the Governor and the legi --
5 both the Senate President and the Speaker of the
6 House.

7 And then finally, SB 7006, which is the open
8 government sunset review bill, which removes the
9 scheduled repeal of public meeting exemption for
10 certain Commission hearings on propriety
11 confidential business information was also
12 enrolled.

13 So those three bills are awaiting to be
14 presented to the Governor. Once he receives those
15 bills, he will have 15 days to either sign, veto or
16 take no action and it will become law. So tracking
17 those, we will keep your offices informed as that
18 happens.

19 And then with that, I just want to take a
20 moment to recognize the Senate confirmation of
21 Commissioner Ortega and Commissioner Payne, that
22 was successful confirmations, and congratulations.

23 And then I would also like to recognize Brian,
24 as this is his last full week with us. You know,
25 he was an incredible addition to the legislative

1 work we were doing, so I know he will go off to do
2 great things, and appreciate the opportunity to
3 work with Florida State and their internship
4 program and continuing to do that.

5 So, yeah, that concludes my legislative
6 update. Brian is available for any questions.

7 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: You gave him the hard
8 part, so I expect all the hard questions will go to
9 Brian.

10 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah.

11 Commissioners?

12 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: I have got a question
13 for Brian.

14 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah.

15 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: Brian, when do you
16 graduate?

17 MR. ARROYO: August.

18 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: Okay. Awesome. Do you
19 plan on staying locally or do you plan on going
20 somewhere else?

21 MR. ARROYO: Yeah, so --

22 CHAIRMAN SMITH: PSC could really use some
23 great minds.

24 MR. ARROYO: Yeah, I will keep that in mind.
25 The PSC is always the back of my mind, so yeah.

1 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: Awesome. Awesome.

2 Cool.

3 COMMISSIONER CLARK: What do we do to get it
4 to the front?

5 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: I was just teeing it
6 up --

7 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah.

8 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: -- you guys drive it
9 home.

10 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah.

11 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: Awesome.

12 CHAIRMAN SMITH: All right. Well, thank you
13 so much, Brian --

14 MR. ARROYO: Of course.

15 CHAIRMAN SMITH: -- for all of your work. I
16 have seen you a lot at the Capitol, and I
17 appreciate, yeah, you always being there. There is
18 a lot of past moving parts, especially towards the
19 end, so I am sure you got to jump in head first to
20 everything, but I appreciate everything you did.

21 MR. ARROYO: Appreciate it. It was an honor
22 to be here, so thanks so much for this experience,
23 literally.

24 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you.

25 I have a -- has -- so has 40 -- the data

1 center bill been presented to the Governor yet?

2 MR. FRANK: Not yet.

3 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay.

4 MR. FRANK: Not yet.

5 CHAIRMAN SMITH: So we -- once he gets that,
6 he will have 15 days?

7 MR. FRANK: Yeah.

8 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay.

9 MR. FRANK: And I will definitely keep your
10 offices updated as that happens.

11 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay. Is there -- this is
12 something I should probably know. I was a poly sci
13 major, but is there a -- like, you know, is there
14 any sort of time limit as far as when those need to
15 be sent to the Governor? It's only once he
16 receives it?

17 MR. FRANK: It's interesting you ask that. I
18 was having this conversation, and I don't know if
19 there is a specific date, but I think -- and I will
20 have to follow up with a more clear answer on that.
21 I think -- I mean, they are required to present him
22 the bills. It doesn't -- I didn't see any
23 specified by any timeline specifically stated in
24 the law, but I do think that if he were to get it,
25 let's say, the day before July 1st, when the bills

1 would go into effect, I would think there would be
2 a high chance he would veto just for not having
3 time to review it. So I think the idea is to give
4 him ample time to review the bill for signature or
5 veto, but I will follow back up with you on any
6 kind of requirement, but I don't think there is now
7 set date.

8 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay.

9 MR. FRANK: But they are required -- I know
10 they are required to present it --

11 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Right.

12 MR. FRANK: -- prior to July 1st.

13 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Okay. Thank you.

14 Okay. Is that it? Yeah? All right. Thank
15 you very much. Thanks for the update, and thank
16 you so much for this very busy session, yeah, we
17 really appreciate it.

18 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: Kind of like
19 intermission. It's over, but --

20 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah, I know, yeah, like,
21 yeah, the --

22 MR. FRANK: I would say our heavy lift is --

23 CHAIRMAN SMITH: They are still going to be
24 very busy.

25 MR. FRANK: -- we are tracking budget and a

1 few other special sessions that are likely coming,
2 so yeah.

3 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Yeah. Sounds good. Okay.
4 All right. Thank you.

5 MR. FRANK: Thank you.

6 MR. ARROYO: Appreciate it.

7 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Ms. Harper, General Counsel's
8 report.

9 MS. HARPER: Good morning, Chairman and
10 Commissioners. Good morning.

11 Just a quick report for you to this, morning.
12 First to recap a couple of interesting things that
13 have occurred in the past, in the recent past, in
14 addition to all the work no you know we are working
15 on with our dockets.

16 We had our Energy Bar Association event in
17 Atlanta, and Commissioner Ortega participated. And
18 it was, I think, a very successful event, and
19 hopefully you guys will get to participate in the
20 next one in DC, or maybe in the next one next year.
21 I think that one is going to be in Richmond so
22 close to DC. I have taken a train with my kids.
23 That was their first exposure to DC. So that was a
24 great event that I am grateful to have participated
25 in.

1 We have begun our brief writing/filing
2 process, so we have just filed a brief in one of
3 our appeals, and we have another one that we are
4 about to file in a couple of weeks. So our appeals
5 section is very busy.

6 Also now looking forward to the future, we are
7 about to start on our rulemaking adventures. As
8 you know, we have to review all of our rules, all
9 of them within five years, and you have the
10 schedule of which ones you will see coming soon, so
11 pretty soon you will see the first batch that we
12 are going to try to propose. So that's something
13 to look forward to.

14 And also we have a new attorney starting next
15 week, so I am very excited for that. So hopefully
16 we can get to introduce her when she starts to you
17 guys.

18 And also looking forward to training next
19 week. Shaw is doing a training on data request
20 discovery in the hearing process for staff, and
21 it's going to be in the big hearing room and we are
22 going to record it, and put it on the intranet. So
23 for anybody that can't attend, they will have an
24 opportunity to watch it. But if you can attend,
25 please do attend in person so it can be interactive

1 and you can ask questions. And it's geared towards
2 new staff, but its open to anybody. And so we
3 welcome assessed staff to come and ask the hard
4 questions that the newer folks need to hear answers
5 to, and hopefully we have them.

6 So that's pretty much what we have been
7 working on, and available if you guys have any
8 questions.

9 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you.

10 Any questions? It sound like you got a lot
11 coming down the pike, so good luck to you and your
12 attorneys, but know you will get through it, so
13 thank you very much.

14 MS. HARPER: Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN SMITH: I am excited you have
16 somebody else joining the team.

17 MS. HARPER: Appreciate it. We are too.
18 Thank you, Chairman.

19 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Mr. Baez.

20 MR. BAEZ: Good morning, Chairman and
21 Commissioners. Nothing -- no official report, but
22 looking -- just looking down the calendar here for
23 those listening in at home, the prehearing that was
24 scheduled for this afternoon is has been canceled,
25 and the Commission will be, as you know, will be

1 hitting the road to Daytona Beach, no truth to the
2 rumor that the Commission will be arriving by
3 motorcycle, so forget that. And we have got some
4 service hearings, virtual services hearings
5 scheduled for next week.

6 Along the lines of thanks, I want to join
7 David in thanking Brian, our intern, for all his
8 help this session, you were right, Chairman, when
9 you say it was a busy one. They were coming fast
10 and furious, the bills. And I think, you know,
11 kudos to the staff on hand to handle our role in
12 that process. It was definitely busy and, at times
13 trying, but I think we all -- the staff certainly
14 did themselves proud, as I am proud of them.

15 And lastly, and I was sternly warned not to --
16 not to do this, but, you know, rule breaker that I
17 am, I will -- I would like to remind everyone today
18 is the great Jim Varian's last official meeting
19 with the Commission after many, many years of
20 service, and I personally want to thank him for
21 reminding me, or at least having me learn that I
22 didn't suffer from migraines until I met Jim
23 Varian, and so he contributed much, much
24 interesting conversation and interesting discussion
25 along the way. Jim, thanks for everything that you

1 have done, and I wish you well, my friend. And
2 please stop him in the hallway and embarrass him
3 with your own stories any chance you get.

4 With that, if there is any questions, please
5 let her rip.

6 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Questions? Yes.

7 COMMISSIONER ORTEGA: No questions, but can I
8 just add a little something, thanks for Jim. You
9 know, we worked together as colleagues for so long
10 as advisors, and I always thought of myself as his
11 boss, but it's been kind of funny the past couple
12 of months to have him in my office, and I really
13 appreciate the sound advice, usually it's you know
14 what you are doing. Trust your gut. You were a
15 better advisor than me, so you are a great
16 Commissioner.

17 All joking aside, good friend for a very long
18 time, and I am excited for you, sad for me for the
19 moment, but very excited for you. Thank you.

20 MR. VARIAN: Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN SMITH: All right. Well, thank you,
22 Jim.

23 And is there anything else?

24 All right. Well, seeing no other matters,
25 yeah, we'll see you all in Daytona tomorrow morning.

1 All right. Thank you very much.

2 (Proceedings concluded.)

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER


STATE OF FLORIDA)
COUNTY OF LEON)

I, DEBRA KRICK, Court Reporter, do hereby
certify that the foregoing proceeding was heard at the
time and place herein stated.

IT IS FURTHER CERTIFIED that I
stenographically reported the said proceedings; that the
same has been transcribed under my direct supervision;
and that this transcript constitutes a true
transcription of my notes of said proceedings.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative,
employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor
am I a relative or employee of any of the parties'
attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I
financially interested in the action.

DATED this 7th day of April, 2026.


DEBRA R. KRICK
NOTARY PUBLIC
COMMISSION #HH575054
EXPIRES AUGUST 13, 2028