

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

“(1) the term ‘commercial mobile data service’ has the meaning given the term in section 6001 of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (47 U.S.C. 1401);

“(2) the term ‘commercial mobile service’ has the meaning given the term in section 332(d) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 332(d));

“(3) the term ‘coverage data’ means, if commercial mobile service or commercial mobile data service is available, general information about the service, which may include available speed tiers, radio frequency signal levels, and network and performance characteristics; and

“(4) the term ‘Universal Service program’ means the universal service support mechanisms established under section 254 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254) and the regulations issued under that section.

“(b) METHODOLOGY ESTABLISHED.—Not later than 180 days after the conclusion of the Mobility Fund Phase II Auction, the Commission shall promulgate regulations to establish a methodology that shall apply to the collection of coverage data by the Commission [Federal Communications Commission] for the purposes of—

“(1) the Universal Service program; or

“(2) any other similar program.

“(c) REQUIREMENTS.—The methodology established under subsection (b) shall—

“(1) contain standard definitions for different available technologies such as 2G, 3G, 4G, and 4G LTE;

“(2) enhance the consistency and robustness of how the data are collected by different parties;

“(3) improve the validity and reliability of coverage data; and

“(4) increase the efficiency of coverage data collection.”

DISCLAIMERS REGARDING INTERNET ACCESS AND PRIVACY

Pub. L. 106-554, §1(a)(4) [div. B, title XVII, §1702], Dec. 21, 2000, 114 Stat. 2763, 2763A-336, provided that:

“(a) DISCLAIMER REGARDING CONTENT.—Nothing in this title [see Short Title of 2000 Amendments note set out under section 6301 of Title 20, Education] or the amendments made by this title shall be construed to prohibit a local educational agency, elementary or secondary school, or library from blocking access on the Internet on computers owned or operated by that agency, school, or library to any content other than content covered by this title or the amendments made by this title.

“(b) DISCLAIMER REGARDING PRIVACY.—Nothing in this title or the amendments made by this title shall be construed to require the tracking of Internet use by any identifiable minor or adult user.”

EXPEDITED REVIEW

Pub. L. 106-554, §1(a)(4) [div. B, title XVII, §1741], Dec. 21, 2000, 114 Stat. 2763, 2763A-351, provided that:

“(a) THREE-JUDGE DISTRICT COURT HEARING.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any civil action challenging the constitutionality, on its face, of this title [see Short Title of 2000 Amendments note set out under section 6301 of Title 20, Education] or any amendment made by this title, or any provision thereof, shall be heard by a district court of three judges convened pursuant to the provisions of section 2284 of title 28, United States Code.

“(b) APPELLATE REVIEW.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an interlocutory or final judgment, decree, or order of the court of three judges in an action under subsection (a) holding this title or an amendment made by this title, or any provision thereof, unconstitutional shall be reviewable as a matter of right by direct appeal to the Supreme Court. Any such appeal shall be filed not more than 20 days after entry of such judgment, decree, or order.”

UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Pub. L. 105-33, title III, §3006, Aug. 5, 1997, 111 Stat. 269, related to appropriations to the Universal Service

Fund in support of programs established pursuant to rules implementing this section and adjustment of payments by telecommunications carriers and other providers of interstate telecommunications prior to repeal by Pub. L. 105-119, title VI, §622, Nov. 26, 1997, 111 Stat. 2521. Section 622 of Pub. L. 105-119 provided further that: “This section shall be deemed a section of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 [Pub. L. 105-33, see Tables for classification] for the purposes of section 10213 of that Act (111 Stat. 712) [2 U.S.C. 902 note], and shall be scored pursuant to paragraph (2) of such section.”

§ 255. Access by persons with disabilities

(a) Definitions

As used in this section—

(1) Disability

The term “disability” has the meaning given to it by section 12102(2)(A)¹ of title 42.

(2) Readily achievable

The term “readily achievable” has the meaning given to it by section 12181(9) of title 42.

(b) Manufacturing

A manufacturer of telecommunications equipment or customer premises equipment shall ensure that the equipment is designed, developed, and fabricated to be accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, if readily achievable.

(c) Telecommunications services

A provider of telecommunications service shall ensure that the service is accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, if readily achievable.

(d) Compatibility

Whenever the requirements of subsections (b) and (c) are not readily achievable, such a manufacturer or provider shall ensure that the equipment or service is compatible with existing peripheral devices or specialized customer premises equipment commonly used by individuals with disabilities to achieve access, if readily achievable.

(e) Guidelines

Within 18 months after February 8, 1996, the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board shall develop guidelines for accessibility of telecommunications equipment and customer premises equipment in conjunction with the Commission. The Board shall review and update the guidelines periodically.

(f) No additional private rights authorized

Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize any private right of action to enforce any requirement of this section or any regulation thereunder. The Commission shall have exclusive jurisdiction with respect to any complaint under this section.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title II, §255, as added Pub. L. 104-104, title I, §101(a), Feb. 8, 1996, 110 Stat. 75.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 12102 of title 42, referred to in subsec. (a)(1), was amended generally by Pub. L. 110-325, §4(a), Sept.

¹ See References in Text note below.

25, 2008, 122 Stat. 3555, and, as so amended, provisions formerly appearing in par. (2)(A) are now contained in par. (1)(A).

§ 256. Coordination for interconnectivity

(a) Purpose

It is the purpose of this section—

(1) to promote nondiscriminatory accessibility by the broadest number of users and vendors of communications products and services to public telecommunications networks used to provide telecommunications service through—

(A) coordinated public telecommunications network planning and design by telecommunications carriers and other providers of telecommunications service; and

(B) public telecommunications network interconnectivity, and interconnectivity of devices with such networks used to provide telecommunications service; and

(2) to ensure the ability of users and information providers to seamlessly and transparently transmit and receive information between and across telecommunications networks.

(b) Commission functions

In carrying out the purposes of this section, the Commission—

(1) shall establish procedures for Commission oversight of coordinated network planning by telecommunications carriers and other providers of telecommunications service for the effective and efficient interconnection of public telecommunications networks used to provide telecommunications service; and

(2) may participate, in a manner consistent with its authority and practice prior to February 8, 1996, in the development by appropriate industry standards-setting organizations of public telecommunications network interconnectivity standards that promote access to—

(A) public telecommunications networks used to provide telecommunications service;

(B) network capabilities and services by individuals with disabilities; and

(C) information services by subscribers of rural telephone companies.

(c) Commission's authority

Nothing in this section shall be construed as expanding or limiting any authority that the Commission may have under law in effect before February 8, 1996.

(d) "Public telecommunications network interconnectivity" defined

As used in this section, the term "public telecommunications network interconnectivity" means the ability of two or more public telecommunications networks used to provide telecommunications service to communicate and exchange information without degeneration, and to interact in concert with one another.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title II, §256, as added Pub. L. 104-104, title I, §101(a), Feb. 8, 1996, 110 Stat. 76.)

§ 257. Market entry barriers proceeding

(a) Elimination of barriers

Within 15 months after February 8, 1996, the Commission shall complete a proceeding for the purpose of identifying and eliminating, by regulations pursuant to its authority under this chapter (other than this section), market entry barriers for entrepreneurs and other small businesses in the provision and ownership of telecommunications services and information services, or in the provision of parts or services to providers of telecommunications services and information services.

(b) National policy

In carrying out subsection (a), the Commission shall seek to promote the policies and purposes of this chapter favoring diversity of media voices, vigorous economic competition, technological advancement, and promotion of the public interest, convenience, and necessity.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title II, §257, as added Pub. L. 104-104, title I, §101(a), Feb. 8, 1996, 110 Stat. 77; amended Pub. L. 115-141, div. P, title IV, §402(f), Mar. 23, 2018, 132 Stat. 1089.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in text, was in the original "this Act", meaning act June 19, 1934, ch. 652, 48 Stat. 1064, known as the Communications Act of 1934, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 609 of this title and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2018—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 115-141 struck out subsec. (c). Text read as follows: "Every 3 years following the completion of the proceeding required by subsection (a), the Commission shall review and report to Congress on—

"(1) any regulations prescribed to eliminate barriers within its jurisdiction that are identified under subsection (a) and that can be prescribed consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity; and

"(2) the statutory barriers identified under subsection (a) that the Commission recommends be eliminated, consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity."

§ 258. Illegal changes in subscriber carrier selections

(a) Prohibition

No telecommunications carrier shall submit or execute a change in a subscriber's selection of a provider of telephone exchange service or telephone toll service except in accordance with such verification procedures as the Commission shall prescribe. Nothing in this section shall preclude any State commission from enforcing such procedures with respect to intrastate services.

(b) Liability for charges

Any telecommunications carrier that violates the verification procedures described in subsection (a) and that collects charges for telephone exchange service or telephone toll service from a subscriber shall be liable to the carrier previously selected by the subscriber in an amount equal to all charges paid by such subscriber after such violation, in accordance with