

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

In the Matter of
Telecommunications Relay Services and
Speech-to-Speech Services for
Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities
CG Docket No. 03-123

ORDER

Adopted: June 3, 2009

Released: June 3, 2009

By the Chief, Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau:

1. In this Order, the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau (Bureau) extends the comment period for issues raised in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) portion of the Public Notice and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (PN & NPRM), released on May 14, 2009. Comments will now be due on July 6, 2009, and reply comments will be due on July 20, 2009.

2. The NPRM seeks comment on whether, notwithstanding the rate methodology established in the 2007 TRS Rate Methodology Order, the Commission should modify the compensation rates for Video Relay Service (VRS) for the 2009-2010 Fund year. Pursuant to the May 14, 2009, NPRM, comments are presently due on June 4, 2009, and reply comments are due June 11, 2009. On May 19, 2009, Sorenson Communications, Inc. (Sorenson), a VRS provider, filed a Motion to Rescind VRS Rate NPRM or, in the Alternative, to Extend the Comment Period. Sorenson asserts that the Commission should "rescind the NPRM, and in its place initiate a new rulemaking on the appropriate

1 See Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities, CG Docket No. 03-123, Public Notice and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (May 14, 2009) (PN & NPRM).

2 Note that the comment period is being extended only for the NPRM; the filing deadlines for comments in response to the Public Notice regarding the National Exchange Carrier Association's (NECA) May 1, 2009, filing of proposed compensation rates for the various forms of TRS are not changed. See paragraphs 7 - 10 of the PN & NPRM; see also Telecommunications Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Interstate Telecommunications Relay Services Fund Payment Formula and Fund Size Estimate (filed May 1, 2009) (2009 NECA Rate Filing).

3 See Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities, CG Docket No. 03-123, Report and Order, and Declaratory Ruling, 22 FCC Rcd 20140 (Nov. 19, 2007) (2007 TRS Rate Methodology Order).

4 VRS is a form of telecommunications relay service (TRS) that that enables the VRS user and the CA to communicate via a video link in sign language, rather than through text. See 47 C.F.R. § 64.601(26) (defining VRS).

5 Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities, CG Docket No. 03-123, Motion to Rescind VRS Rate NPRM or, in the Alternative, to Extend the Comment Period, filed by Sorenson Communications, Inc. (May 19, 2009) (Sorenson Motion).

long-term rate methodology to take effect after June 30, 2010.”<sup>6</sup> In the alternative, Sorenson requests that the Commission extend the comment period to allow interested stakeholders more time to comment on the *NPRM* given its potential impact on the VRS industry.<sup>7</sup> On May 26, 2009, a coalition of consumer organizations filed comments taking no position on Sorenson’s *Motion to Rescind*, but supporting an extension of the comment period.<sup>8</sup>

3. Although the Commission does not routinely grant extensions of time,<sup>9</sup> we find that in this case an extension of the comment period is warranted to afford parties the necessary time to file comments that will result in a more complete record in this proceeding. This limited extension will not unduly delay the Commission’s consideration of the issues.

4. Accordingly, **IT IS ORDERED** that the *Motion to Extend the Comment Period* filed by Sorenson Communications, Inc., **IS GRANTED** to the extent indicated herein. Comments are now due by July 6, 2009, and reply comments are due by July 20, 2009.

5. This action is taken pursuant to the authority provided in Section 1.46 of the Commission’s rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.46, and under delegated authority pursuant to Sections 0.141 and 0.361 of the Commission’s Rules, 47 C.F.R. §§ 0.141, 0.361.

6. To request materials in accessible formats (such as Braille, large print, electronic files, or audio format), send an e-mail to [fcc504@fcc.gov](mailto:fcc504@fcc.gov) or call the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau at 202-418-0530 (voice), 202-418-0432 (TTY). This *Order* can also be downloaded in Word and Portable Document Format at <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro>.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Catherine W. Seidel, Chief  
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau

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<sup>6</sup> *Id.* at 2.

<sup>7</sup> *See id.* Sorenson asserts that the public should have “at least 45 days to submit comments and 15 days to submit reply comments.” *Id.* at 10. Forty five days from the date of publication of the *NPRM* in the Federal Register (May 21) is July 5, a Sunday. Comments will therefore be due on July 6.

<sup>8</sup> *Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities*, CG Docket No. 03-123, Comments on Sorenson Communications, Inc.’s Motion to Rescind VRS Rate NPRM or, in the Alternative, to Extend the Comment Period, filed by Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc.; Association of Late-Deafened Adults, Inc.; National Association of the Deaf; Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer Advocacy Network; California Coalition of Agencies Serving the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; American Association of the Deaf-Blind; and Hearing Loss Association of America (May 26, 2009).

<sup>9</sup> 47 C.F.R. § 1.46(a).