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**For Immediate Release****FCC PROPOSES TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN EMERGENCY ALERTING*****Seeks Information on Feasibility of Sending Alerts over Internet***

WASHINGTON, March 17, 2021—The Federal Communications Commission today proposed rules to improve the way the public receives emergency alerts on their mobile phones, televisions, and radios.

The nation’s Emergency Alert System and Wireless Emergency Alerts help keep the public safe and informed and are of ever-increasing importance given the emergencies and disasters Americans have faced in recent years. In 2018, however, a false emergency alert in Hawaii mistakenly warned of an incoming ballistic missile and highlighted the need to improve these systems.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 subsequently charged the Commission with adopting rules to strengthen emergency alerting in various areas. Consistent with this directive, the Commission today adopted a Notice Proposed Rulemaking to ensure that more people receive relevant emergency alerts, enable government agencies to report false alerts when they occur, and improve the way states plan for emergency alerts.

Specifically, the Commission proposed to:

- Combine the current “Presidential Alerts” category, which is non-optional on devices that receive Wireless Emergency Alerts, with alerts from the FEMA Administrator. The new non-optional alert class would be called “National Alerts.”
- Encourage all states to form State Emergency Communications Committees, which help administer alerting on the state level, or to review the composition and governance of existing committees, as well as require these committees to certify that they held a meeting in the past year.
- Provide a checklist of information that should be included in annual submissions of state Emergency Alert System plans and amend the process for Commission review of those plans.
- Specify that government agencies may report false emergency alerts to the FCC’s 24/7 Operations Center.
- Require and ensure that Emergency Alert System participants can repeat certain alerts over television and radio when the government alert originator requests it.

Also consistent with the new legislation, the Commission adopted a Notice of Inquiry to explore the technical feasibility delivering Emergency Alert System alerts through the Internet,

including streaming services, and whether it is feasible for Emergency Alert System participants to leverage the Internet to offer advanced alerting capabilities to the public.

Action by the Commission March 17, 2021 by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Notice of Inquiry (FCC 21-36). Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr, Starks, and Simington approving. Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel issuing a separate statement.

PS Docket Nos. 15-94, 15-91

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*This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).*