

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER DEBORAH TAYLOR TATE**

Re: Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities; E911 Requirements for IP-Enabled Service Providers, CG Docket No. 03-123 and WC Docket No. 05-196, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking.

On March 19, 2008, in our *VRS 911 Order*, we adopted interim emergency call handling requirements for Internet-based TRS providers. Pursuant to that Order on April 29, 2008, the Commission held a Stakeholder Workshop in which consumers and a cross-section of industry representatives discussed numbering issues, including three comprehensive numbering proposals reflected in the record. Today we fulfill our commitment in that Order and adopt a ten-digit telephone numbering system for users of Internet-based TRS, specifically Video Relay Service and IP Relay. Significantly, the ten-digit numbering system will further the functional equivalency mandate by permitting voice telephone users to call VRS and IP Relay users by dialing the relay user's ten-digit telephone number, the same way that voice telephone users call other voice telephone users. In addition, the item adopts registered location requirements similar to those applicable to interconnected VoIP providers to ensure that consumers can call emergency services via VRS and IP Relay and have their call automatically route to appropriate emergency services authorities.

As the Commission continues to consider the needs of the deaf and hard-of-hearing community, we must ensure that all Americans benefit from advances in telecommunications services and equipment. Today we acknowledge that significant numbers of persons with hearing disabilities are seeking innovative services. I look forward to implementation of this plan by the end of 2008.