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# Alexicon *insider*

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE  
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

## Regulatory Headlines

### [What's Next for Net Neutrality?](#)

The battle over the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) repeal of net neutrality rules is entering a new phase, with opponents of the move launching efforts to preserve the Obama-era consumer protections. The net neutrality rules had required internet service providers to treat all web traffic equally. Republicans on the commission decried the regulatory structure as a gross overreach, and quickly moved to reverse them once the Trump administration came to power.

### [States Refile Net Neutrality Lawsuits](#)

A coalition of 22 state attorneys general and the District of Columbia on Thursday refiled legal challenges intended to block the Trump administration's repeal of landmark rules designed to ensure a free and open internet from taking effect.

### [New National Broadband Map](#)

The FCC today made live an updated National Broadband Map, replacing one originally released seven years ago. National Broad-

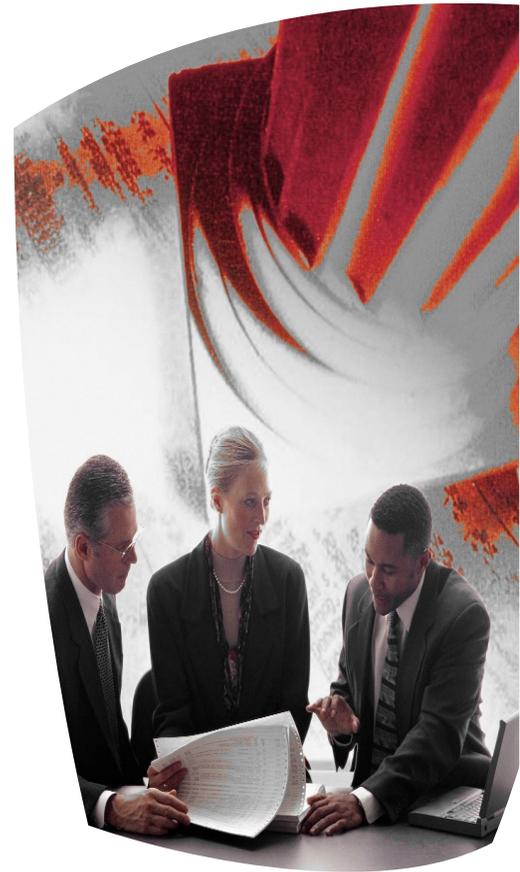
band Map updates include more relevant speed tiers, as well as the ability to overlay satellite imagery, to compare two different areas, to view broadband availability by individual addresses and more, explained FCC officials at today's monthly commission meeting. Map users also have the option of downloading data sets, which they can use for their own purposes.

### [FCC Cuts Payphone Audit Rules](#)

The FCC has eliminated outdated and costly payphone audit requirements as no longer justified in a changing communications marketplace.

### [FCC IG Investigating Pai](#)

The Republican chairman of the Federal Communications Commission is being investigated by the agency's inspector general. The inspector general wants to know whether Ajit Pai improperly pushed through rules in an effort to benefit the Sinclair Broadcast Group, according to The New York Times on Thursday.



## Market Watch

[Retransmission Fees May Reach \\$19 by 2020](#)

[Charter Launches A La Carte Streaming Bundle](#)

[Windstream Weighs Sale of Fiber, CLEC Assets](#)

[Consolidated Drops FairPoint Name](#)



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Questions? Comments?  
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# Technology Trends

*New and notable technology and services*

## SpaceX Broadband Satellites Launched

A pair of small satellites named for an adventurous Belgian cartoon character could serve as proof of concept for an ambitious global broadband service envisioned by Elon Musk. After days of delays, a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket carrying the two small satellites, newly dubbed Tintin A and B by Musk (but known more formally as Microsat-2a and Microsat-2b), lifted off from Vandenberg Air Force base in California on Thursday morning.

## Dish Network Wireless Buildout

Dish Network will spend up to \$1 billion on Phase One of its planned wireless network buildout, reaching at least 70% of its licensed territory with a narrowband IoT offering that will transform the satellite TV company into a business that offers full connectivity.

## Report: Finding Cyber Threats is Difficult

New cybersecurity reports just released by Cisco and Verizon Wireless say that businesses are faced with more sophisticated security threats from wireline and wireless devices running on their networks. In its 2018 Annual Cybersecurity Report, Cisco found that malware sophistication is increasing as hackers begin to weaponize cloud services and evade detection through encryption, which is used as a tool to conceal command-and-control activity.

## New “Supertowers” for Rural Broadband

Ericsson is working Boston-based startup Altaeros to demonstrate a new “SuperTower” to help operators deploy LTE in hard-to-reach rural communities using tethered aerostats. Last year, the two companies partnered to deploy a multi-sector LTE base station on a SuperTower in rural Maine, providing broadband speeds with streaming video.

## MWC 2018: IoT, 5G, B2B

Mobile World Congress used to be the place where the latest greatest smartphones were unveiled. Today, MWC is all about business and enabling next-gen networks, platforms and sensors designed to make everything smart.



## **IN FOCUS:** **National Broadband Map** **Lifeline/Forms** **Joint Board NPRM**

### **National Broadband Map**

As noted above, the FCC released its new National Broadband Map this week ([link](#)). The map reflects fixed deployment, and is based on Form 477 data carriers file with the FCC semi-annually. The map, which was previously under the purview of the NTIA and had not been updated for a few years, is designed for use by current and prospective broadband customers. As such, accuracy is vital, and, according to [Commissioner Rosenworcel](#), is in many ways lacking.

We recommend providers examine the map for major errors and attempt to determine the source of those errors (i.e., Form 477 filings). Once customers become aware of the new map, it is likely that incorrect data reflected on the map will translate to customer inquiries and, possibly, complaints.

### **Lifeline Forms**

The FCC’s Wireline Competition Bureau recently released some [guidance](#) on upcoming changes to federal Lifeline program universal forms. These forms, with exceptions in states where specific forms are required, are to be used beginning July 1, 2018:

- ⇒ Form 5629: Customer eligibility form
- ⇒ Form 5630: Customer recertification
- ⇒ Form 5631: Customer eligibility at addresses with multiple households

We recommend all ETCs become familiar with the new forms, available [here](#), and if/when use will be required. We expect that most states, even those with state-specific Lifeline forms, will utilize the FCC’s new universal forms at some point.

In related news, the [2018 Federal Poverty Guidelines](#) have been published. For the federal program, consumers qualify for Lifeline discounts if gross annual household income is 135% or less than the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

### **Joint Board NPRM**

The FCC released an [NPRM](#) yesterday requesting comment on the Federal-State Joint Board on Jurisdictional Separations’ recommendation to revise certain Part 36 rules. This action by the Joint Board is a result of the FCC’s Part 32 rule revision order released last year (see 3/1/17 Special Bulletin), and relates solely to the FCC’s decision to eliminate the Class A/B classification. As such, the NPRM should not affect small rural LECs at all.



## Alexicon at Work

### **Conferences and Meetings**

Alexicon will have a substantial presence at NTCA’s Rural Telecom Industry Meeting and Expo (RTIME) in Austin, TX starting Sunday and running through next Wednesday. Be on the lookout for Doug Kitch, Rob Strait, Dion Nero, and Chris Barron wandering the halls. Chris Barron will also attend the joint meeting of the Industry and Regulatory Policy and Competitive and Advanced Services Committee meeting on Monday, February 23.



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Questions? Comments?

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