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# Alexicon *insider*

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE  
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

## Regulatory Headlines

### [FCC Adopts 2.5 GHz Spectrum Order](#)

At its July open meeting, the FCC voted 3-2 to adopt an Order to commercialize Educational Broadband Service (EBS) spectrum in the 2.5 GHz band. Before opening up unassigned EBS spectrum to competitive bidding, the FCC first will open a priority filing window for rural Tribal Nations.

### [FCC Proposes \\$100M Pilot Program](#)

The FCC has adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) on a three-year, \$100 million Connected Care Pilot program that will test the idea of providing telehealth services to veterans and low-income patients.

### [FCC Approves More CAF Phase II](#)

The Federal Communications Commission this week announced that it had authorized more than \$563 million in funding to expand rural broadband services in 24 states. Internet service providers in those states will be building out broadband services in the underserved areas of those states over the next 10 years...

### [House Bill Would Fund Rural Networks](#)

U.S. Representative Markwayne Mullin (R-OK) has introduced a bill, the Rural Broadband Network Advancement Act of 2019 ([Rural Broadband Act](#)), to assist rural broadband providers in high cost rural areas by helping fund their deployment, operational, and delivery costs.

### [House Panel Advances Robocall Bill](#)

A House panel on Wednesday voted to advance legislation aimed at protecting U.S. consumers from the billions of illegal robocalls made every year. The Stopping Bad Robocalls Act had accrued 152 co-sponsors and passed the House Energy and Commerce Committee, 49-0.

### [Robocalls Spike During Summer Months](#)

For the past several years, U.S. consumers have received more robocalls during the summer months than other parts of the year, according to a study obtained exclusively by The Hill.



## Market Watch

[Consortium Steps Up Effort on Digital Divide](#)

[CoBank Report on Equipment Ban](#)

[Video Piracy Will Cost \\$12.5 Billion](#)

[Sprint/T-Mobile Approval Expected Soon](#)



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# Technology Trends

New and notable technology and services

## 5G Radio Dot Small Cells Deployed

Swisscom has deployed Ericsson's 5G Radio Dots in the carrier's live 5G commercial network. The two companies also completed a 5G data call between Ericsson's office in the Swiss city of Bern and Swisscom's office in nearby Liebefeld. The call took place over the 5G Radio Dot System during an event for Joint Mobile Day in Bern.

## Smart Cities and Enterprise IoT

Powering smart cities is one of the most ambitious use cases for the internet of things (IoT), combining a wide variety of IoT technologies to create coherent systems that span not just individual buildings or campuses but entire metropolises. As such, smart cities offer a window into the evolution of enterprise IoT technologies and implementations on the largest scale.

## The Router's Route to IoT Security

It is newly minted conventional wisdom that not a single information security conference goes by without a presentation about the abysmal state of Internet of Things security. While this is a boon for researchers looking to make a name for themselves, this sorry state of affairs is definitely not beneficial for anyone who owns a connected device.

## State Telehealth Use Climbing

More states are covering remote patient monitoring but the conditions for payment in each state vary, with some states limiting RPM coverage to patients with specific conditions or diseases, according to the American Telemedicine Association's 2019 State of the States Report: Coverage and Reimbursement issued on Thursday. The report identified the eight most common telehealth providers: physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, licensed mental health professional, psychologist, physical therapist, occupational therapist and dentist.

## Cloud-Based Emergency Service

In order to boost efficiency and reduce operational costs, CenturyLink has launched a cloud-based managed emergency call handling service. The subscription-based service enables public safety organizations to migrate their on-premise call management solutions to the cloud while also allowing them to receive real-time delivery of new functionalities, including critical updates, without...



## IN FOCUS

### FCC August Open Meeting Agenda Items

In a short turn around from its July 10 meeting, the FCC will take up a diverse range of subjects at its August 1 open meeting ([link](#)). For small broadband providers and rural areas in general, the FCC will vote on items related to broadband mapping, the next phase of price cap carrier CAF support, and revising the rural healthcare program, along with a couple of items related to the RAY BAUM'S Act.

**Broadband Mapping.** This was covered in the July 12, 2019 *Special Bulletin*, but the bottom line is the FCC wants to implement a polygon-based broadband deployment reporting method as soon as possible, followed by a possible, and more granular, location-based regime.

**Rural Digital Opportunity Fund.** As we reported back in April, and naming conventions aside, the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) is simply the expected auction of CAF Phase II support where the price cap carrier accepted the statewide offer. The term of this support expires in 2020, so the FCC will adopt the "RDOF" NPRM to redistribute the support via a competitive bidding process (i.e., reverse auction). RDOF support will be available for ten years, and the FCC appears to be ready to distribute approximately \$20.4 billion over that time frame to increase availability of 25/3 Mbps service. The \$20.4B budget covers the \$1.675B paid out annually under CAF Phase II statewide support, and approximately \$100M per year originally earmarked for the Remote Areas Fund.

**Promoting Telehealth in Rural America.** The FCC will take up a

fairly substantial Report and Order that will make some material changes to the Rural Healthcare Program. Among the reforms listed in the draft order are (1) changing the distribution of RHC Program funding to promote efficiency and reduce incentives that encourage waste, fraud, and abuse; (2) Streamline and simplify the way the discounted rates that health care providers pay for communications services and the amount of support received from the Program are calculated; and (3) In the event demand for the Program exceeds its funding cap, target funding to the most rural areas and those facing shortages of health care providers and ensure that eligible rural health care providers continue to benefit from Program funding.

**RAY BAUM'S Act Items** (Repack Airwaves Yielding Better Access for Users of Modern Services, believe it or not)

- **Kari's Law.** Addresses 911 calls made from multi-line telephone systems.
- **Anti-Spoofing Rules.** This order would extend the reach of the Commission's current Truth in Caller ID rules to include covered communications originating outside the United States that are directed at consumers within the United States.



## Alexicon at Work

Cost study and HCLS filing season is quickly wrapping up (submissions are due to NECA on July 31). Alexicon's consultants are working diligently to ensure all goes smoothly with these filings.

Dion Nero will attend the State Independent Telephone Association (SITA) of Kansas annual meeting in Dodge City, Kansas on July 28-31.



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