



For Immediate Release

INCOMPAS Statement on FCC Vote on Business Data Service, Ending Lock Up

Washington DC (April 28th, 2016) – Today the Federal Communications Commission voted to end anti-competitive lock-up provisions and launched a further rulemaking to finally address the lack of competition in the critical Business Data Services market.

INCOMPAS, the Internet and competitive networks association, has been leading the fight to end the lock-up provisions, and recently reached a compromise agreement with Verizon to help move the Business Data Services proceeding forward.

In response to the FCC action, Chip Pickering, CEO of INCOMPAS released the following statement:

“Armed with the most significant data collection in its history, the FCC is primed to take action so that broadband competition across the nation’s communities is promoted. We remain committed to working with the Commission and all stakeholders to reach a positive outcome for business broadband customers who are seeking more choice, lower prices and innovation.

“Ending lock-up provisions will empower customers to break free and taste the freedom of competition. A fluid marketplace where business consumers of all sizes, including schools, libraries, hospitals, and local and state governments can choose their broadband provider will incentivize the deployment of faster, next generation wired and wireless networks.

“INCOMPAS and its member companies have long led the charge against lock-up provisions, and terms and conditions that impede competition and deployment. We want to thank Chairman Wheeler for his commitment and follow through on this issue.

“With the tech transitions and lock up actions, this Commission has completed two of the three legs of the competition stool. Next is the most critical step—comprehensive reform of the Business Data Services (“BDS”) market to end the monopoly rents.

“As stated in our agreement with Verizon, we are committed to working for technology-neutral policies that ensure providers do not abuse their market positions in the prices, terms and conditions for BDS services—services that are necessary for wireless backhaul and competitive services to business customers, schools, hospitals, libraries and government buildings. This action today is a critical step forward in promoting next generation mobile broadband networks such as 5G.

“A competitive policy that ensures the BDS marketplace works will improve the connections to communities, including the availability and delivery of healthcare. Commissioner Clyburn understands this and her commitment throughout this very long process and her and her staff’s willingness to continue to work to improve the Commission’s rulemaking is commendable and appreciated.

“We also thank Commissioner Rosenworcel for her support of this item, and making deployment, competition and administration principles to help guide the debate. The Business Data Services proceeding is key to delivering more and better services to schools and libraries, with potential savings for the Commission’s E-rate program—allowing its limited funding to reach more schools and libraries in need.”

About INCOMPAS:

INCOMPAS, the Internet and competitive networks association, is the leading trade group advocating for competition policy across all networks. INCOMPAS represents Internet, communications and technology companies large and small, advocating for laws and policies that promote competition, innovation and economic development. Learn more at www.incompas.org or follow us on Twitter: @INCOMPAS.

