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## **COMPTEL Looks Forward to Special Access Reform as OMB Approves FCC to Proceed with Mandatory Data Collection**

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Late on Friday, August 15, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved a revised version of the FCC’s special access mandatory data request under the Paperwork Reduction Act, and the FCC today announced that it will proceed with the process.

The following statement can be attributed to Chip Pickering, CEO of COMPTEL, the leading trade association for the competitive communications industry:

*“For nearly a decade, the industry has been debating the framework for special access, which is a multi-billion dollar market through which valuable broadband communications services are delivered for businesses, non-profits and wireless carriers. As Chairman Wheeler recognized, this service is becoming increasingly important in the digital economy and the Commission has a ‘statutory mandate to ensure that these services are provided at reasonable rates and on reasonable terms and conditions.’*

*COMPTEL and its members will continue to work with the Commission as it collects and analyzes special access data. Special access is a market dominated by large incumbent telcos. It is our hope that this process will lead to rapid, fact-based evaluation and correction of long-standing special access market failures so that small, mid-sized and enterprise consumers, including government, schools, libraries and healthcare facilities, can benefit from a robust, competitive communications marketplace. As Commissioner Clyburn said in December 2012 when the special access data request order was released, ‘the industry and the consumers impacted have waited long enough’ for resolutions of these issues. We agree wholeheartedly with this sentiment. After 10 years of debate and waiting, it is clearly time for special access reform to occur, so businesses across America can further benefit from competition and the innovative broadband services COMPTEL members provide.*

*We thank Chairman Wheeler and Commission staff for completing this important step in the process, and we urge them to move forward quickly with the data collection and their analysis.”*

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**About COMPTEL**

Based in Washington, D.C., COMPTEL is the leading industry association representing competitive communications service providers and their supplier partners. COMPTEL members are entrepreneurial companies driving technological

innovation and creating economic growth through competitive voice, video, and data offerings and the development and deployment of next-generation, IP-based networks and services. COMPTEL advances its members' interests through trade shows, networking, education, and policy advocacy before Congress, the Federal Communications Commission and the courts. COMPTEL works to ensure that competitive communications providers can continue to offer lower prices, better service, and greater innovation to consumers. For more information, visit [www.comptel.org](http://www.comptel.org).