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BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Order Instituting Rulemaking Proceeding to Consider Service Quality Rules for Wireless Carriers.	R. 26-02-017

REPLY COMMENTS AND RESPONSE OF CELLCO PARTNERSHIP DBA VERIZON WIRELESS (U 3001 C) TO AUGUST 19, 2026 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE RULING ISSUING STAFF PROPOSAL

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I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

Pursuant to the schedule set forth in the August 19, 2026 Administrative Law Judge's ("ALJ") Ruling Issuing Staff Proposal (the "Ruling"), Cellco Partnership dba Verizon Wireless (U 3001 C) ("Verizon") hereby submits its reply comments addressing the opening comments[1] on the Ruling.

The comments establish that the Staff Proposal rests on unsubstantiated anecdotes and ignores the considerable evidence disproving the need for the proposed Customer Service standards, the Cal OES Community Isolation Outage metric, the Network Availability rule, and the Signal Propagation mapping requirement. The Staff Proposal's prescriptive mandates—namely, the rigid Interactive Voice Response ("IVR") "first prompt" customer care rule, the infeasible 24-hour strict liability outage metric, the daily 99% PUMA network availability standard, and the unnecessary signal propagation mapping—ignore the reality of wireless operations, raise federal preemption issues, and would impose extraordinary costs without tangible consumer benefits. The record demonstrates that:

1. The Proposals Lack Evidentiary Support: The proposed Customer Service standards are based on anecdotes and derived from monopoly regulation-era metrics and are incompatible with providers' flexible, efficient, and customer-focused customer service operations and the mobile nature of wireless service. The proposed outage and network availability metrics ignore the evidence, which shows a downward trend of wireless industry average outages; an average *annual* network uptime of 99%; and that many lengthier outages are caused by factors outside of providers' control (such as vandalism and third-party cable cuts). The proposed signal propagation map is contrary to expert conclusions, with the FCC declining to require the type of details Staff recommends.

2. The Proposals Are Infeasible or Impractical: As the Wireless Providers explained, the "first prompt" mandate would interfere with a smooth and efficient process of engaging with customers initially through the IVR and would compel certain low-cost digital-only business

[1] Verizon received opening comments on the Ruling from the following parties: AT&T Mobility LLC (New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC), AT&T Mobility Wireless Operations Holdings, Inc., and Santa Barbara Cellular Systems, Ltd. (collectively, "AT&T"); Center for Accessible Technology ("CforAT") and the Rural County Representatives of California ("RCRC"); CTIA; Public Advocates Office ("Cal Advocates"); Small Business Utility Advocates ("SBUA"); T-Mobile West, LLC ("T-Mobile"); and The Utility Reform Network ("TURN"). AT&T, T-Mobile, and Verizon are referred to collectively herein as the "Wireless Providers."

models to either eliminate the digital-only platform or exit the market, which would eliminate choices for consumers. The network outage and availability standards would require nearly perfect network performance without any exemptions for outages beyond providers' control (e.g., backhaul fiber cuts, theft, vandalism, weather or disaster-related restricted roads, lack of space for backup power) or where necessary such as for maintenance. While not infeasible, the proposed propagation maps are also impractical in that the proposed information would establish unfounded wireless signal coverage standards that would not be useful and may potentially be confusing. Consumers may more reliably determine highly localized coverage through the Wireless Providers' free trials.

3. The Staff Proposal Requires Further Clarification: Crucially, most parties sought clarity on the definition of "availability" in the proposed Network Availability metric, which Staff has not provided. Given that this is a fundamental aspect of the proposed rule, *Staff must clarify the proposed rule before the record is closed*. In addition, many commenters sought additional clarifications or revisions of the proposed rules. Due process requires that parties be permitted to comment and submit evidence on any such clarified rule and other revised proposals.

4. The Costs of the Proposal Would be Extraordinary and Far Outweigh the Benefits: As CTIA cited in its comments, the aggregated industry cost estimates of compliance with the proposals total hundreds of millions to over $1 billion for the Customer Service Standards, and over $6 billion for the outage and network availability metrics.[2] The consumer benefits are nominal, at best, and as the providers discussed, the proposals may result in higher prices and/or reduced investment in the State.

5. The Record Must Stay Open to Cure Procedural Deficiencies: Finally, procedural deficiencies prevented the parties from being able to provide meaningful comment and participate fully. To name just a few irregularities, the Wireless Providers have been compelled to respond to various rulings on an unusually truncated schedule; were unable to access underlying workpapers for the Staff Proposal before submitting comments on the proposal; and were denied the opportunity to submit aggregated evidence into the record based on a novel and highly restrictive evidentiary standard cited by the ALJ less than a week before the record closes. As further described in the Request by CTIA, AT&T, T-Mobile, and Verizon for Commission

[2] *CTIA Opening Comments* at 37.

Review of ALJ Rulings, the record should remain open so that parties can review the underlying workpapers and any revised proposals, and submit meaningful comment and evidence on them.

To the extent that there is no revision to the Staff Proposal, the Commission should reject these unsupported and punitive proposals. Instead, the Commission should embrace a constructive reporting and transparency framework—as advocated by AT&T and Verizon—to foster collaborative data collection and meaningful, evidence-based oversight.

II. THE PROPOSED CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD AND NON-INDUSTRY PARTIES' PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS ARE UNSUPPORTED, UNNECESSARY, AND UNREASONABLE AND WOULD JEOPARDIZE PROMPT AND EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER SERVICE.

A. Non-Industry Comments Do Nothing to Provide a Reliable Evidentiary Foundation to Support the Proposed Customer Service Rules.

RCRC and CforAT unpersuasively assert that "[t]he Commission has a substantial record from this proceeding and its predecessor," and urge "swift Commission action" to enact new rules.[3] As an initial matter, the Commission concluded in the predecessor proceeding that there was *not* enough evidence to justify new wireless customer service rules. That deficiency is why wireless services were exempted from General Order ("G.O.") 133-E and the current proceeding was opened. The Order Instituting Rulemaking ("OIR") directly states that "the Commission concluded that it was necessary to "build a robust record on *whether* the Commission should adopt service quality metrics and standards for wireless carriers," and "to obtain more information to determine the *appropriate* enforcement process for wireless outages and customer service issues, prior to adopting new rules for wireless carriers."[4] To date, the Commission has still not established what is "appropriate" to address any wireless customer service problem. Instead, Staff attempts to extend the existing G.O. 133-E rules and rely on anecdotal statements with no analysis of the data they reviewed to determine whether their proposed rules are "appropriate."[5]

As Verizon stated in its opening comments, the Staff Proposal does not explain: (1) why rigid, standardized metrics are necessary to ensure that customers are receiving satisfactory customer service; (2) how it determined that the existing G.O. 133-E rules are necessary for the Wireless Providers, given the highly dynamic and competitive nature of the industry and the

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[3] *RCRC/CforAT Opening Comments* at 3.
[4] *OIR* at 3 (emphasis added).
[5] *See T-Mobile Opening Comments* at 24.

mobile nature of the service;[6] or (3) how it determined that a statistically valid sample of consumers would prefer rigid answer and call back times over personalized IVR call routing.[7] Verizon agrees with AT&T that "the Proposal fails to offer any analysis regarding how the proposed Customer Service Standard will actually improve customer service" or "how the proposed Standard will shorten calls, decrease phone transfers, or avoid increasing customer service costs."[8] T-Mobile similarly states that the Staff proposal "fails to even identify a credible 'problem' proposed rules are intended to address."[9] However, as CTIA points out, "[d]espite these deficiencies, the Staff Proposal nevertheless urges the Commission to impose fundamental and costly changes to wireless providers' customer service practices."[10]

As discussed in Verizon's Opening Comments, during the August 27 Workshop, when asked if Staff researched whether California customers are dissatisfied with their wireless providers' customer care, Staff's response made clear that they had not.[11] This was a common theme during that workshop—Staff had not fully analyzed the need for their proposals.[12] Staff's own comments demonstrate that there is no record evidence that supports the proposed Customer Service Standard.

Non-industry commenters add nothing to the record to support claims that wireless customer service issues exist that warrant the Staff's proposed prescriptive rules. Essentially, they encourage the Commission to enact rules that will cause service providers to incur massive operating costs for their customer service operations, overhaul current customer service innovations and any future innovations, and meet arbitrary callback timeframes without any consideration as to how such requirements would result in *better* customer service for California customers.[13] These non-industry parties also would encourage adoption of rules that may drive

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[6] Unlike landline or VoIP connections that are tied to a location, mobile phones go with the customer meaning they can make or receive calls regarding customer service from anywhere.
[7] *See Verizon Opening Comments* at 8-10.
[8] *See AT&T Opening Comments* at 4.
[9] *T-Mobile Opening Comments* at 31.
[10] *CTIA Opening Comments* at 20.
[11] Wireless Service Quality Workshop 2 (Aug. 27, 2026) ("Workshop 2") at 2:04:54–2:05:13, available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ognzj9jDSVk.
[12] Staff's response to most questions regarding its proposed rules followed a similar pattern, asking the Wireless Providers to essentially answer the questions "in the comments." *See, e.g.*, Workshop 2 at 00:32:08-00:32:32:51 (Lai, Slawson);00:44:21-00:44:39 (Osborn, Bolanos); 01:14:11-01:14:52 (Lai, Bolanos); 1:19:59-01:20:12 (Osborn, Bolanos); 01:30:48-01:31:39 (Lai, Bloomfield).
[13] *See, e.g.*, *Cal Advocates Opening Comments* at 6-9; *TURN Opening Comments* at 11-13.

certain low-cost, digital-only business offerings out of California and harm the very consumers that they are concerned about.[14]

At best, these commenters try to support an unsubstantiated need for the proposed rules by presenting a handful of cherry-picked PPH statements (including one related to availability and one from three years ago).[15] In particular, they reference PPH statements concerning issues outside the scope of the proposed customer service answer and callback times,[16] a Trustpilot review against AT&T that does not address whether the commenter is based in California (or is even a customer of AT&T),[17] and a press release for a J.D. Power study, which SBUA claims, without substantiation, "*could* be seen as customers awarding wireless providers Ds and Fs [grades]."[18]

Verizon notes that SBUA did not submit the actual J.D. Power study, but only a press release regarding the study.[19] Without the benefit of the entire study, neither Staff nor Verizon can analyze its contents, including what questions participants were asked, how participants ranked their choices (*e.g.*, 1-10, 1-100, 1-1000), whether J.D. Power considers its sample of 59,097 as statistically valid or simply illustrative, and whether the wireless industry's scores were any worse than any other industry's scores. In fact, it is unclear whether SBUA reviewed the entire study or relied only on the press release. It is clear, however, that SBUA drew its own

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[14] Verizon notes that the J.D. Power press release that SBUA submitted as evidence for such customer service rules found that Visible Wireless was ranked second in customer satisfaction for MVNO prepaid services. This is because, as Verizon has previously shared: customers appreciate the flexibility of Visible's low-cost, digital-only platform, and voluntarily opt into this platform. *See* Visible, "Visible Ranked $1 by J.D. Power for Best Purchase Experience in its Segment" (Aug. 19, 2024) available at: https://www.visible.com/blog/inside-visible/visible-ranked-first-by-jd-power (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026). In fact, as discussed below, J.D. Power found that customers are highly satisfied when they can resolve issues quickly through digital contact.

[15] *See TURN Opening Comments* at 12-13.

[16] *TURN Opening Comments* at 12 (citing five PPH statements related to a variety of topics, one of which relates to poor signal quality, which is an availability issue, and outside the scope of the proceeding as a whole).

[17] *See TURN Opening Comments* at 13 (referencing an example presented by Regina Costa during the June 25 Workshop); *see also* Trustpilot, "Review of AT&T" (Jun. 22, 2026) available at: https://www.trustpilot.com/reviews/6a39ac0b6d35787b9e95bdf4 (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026) (providing no information as to the commenter's location other than "United States").

[18] *See SBUA Opening Comments* at 9 (emphasis added).

[19] J.D. Power, "Easy to Work With, Hard to Leave: Simplicity Drives Wireless Customer Loyalty, J.D. Power Finds" (Jan. 30, 2026) available at: https://www.jdpower.com/business/press-releases/2026-us-wireless-carrier-satisfaction-study-volume-1/ (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026).

conclusions regarding the charts provided and what they purport to show.[20] A subheading in the press release states: "Fixing problems through *digital contact methods* in under 10 minutes brings higher satisfaction," suggesting that customers do not require live agents.[21] Just taking the press release at face value, it appears that J.D. Power received feedback from 59,097 customers. As of June 2025, there were an estimated 394,505,000 wireless subscribers.[22] This infinitesimal subset represents approximately .015% of *all* wireless customers nationwide.[23] Moreover, the press release does not discuss California-specific customer experiences. This hearsay press release does not constitute sufficient evidence to support the proposed Customer Service standard.[24]

As CTIA explains, "[e]ven if unsworn statements at PPHs and workshops constituted non-hearsay evidence (they do not), an agency may not selectively rely on evidence supporting a preferred outcome while disregarding evidence that weighs against that outcome without reasoned explanation. Yet that is exactly what the Staff Proposal does."[25] AT&T also states that "[t]he Staff Proposal is not based on any systematic survey, reliable performance data, or analysis of customer outcomes, but instead relies on a handful of unsworn public participation hearing anecdotes and a single personal account from a TURN employee."[26] The Commission should not enact unnecessary, expensive, and wholly unvetted requirements for the Wireless Providers based on the anecdotal commentary offered by the non-industry commenters.

B. Further Expansions of Staff's Proposed Rules Are Unjustified.

Not only has Staff not answered the fundamental question of *why* new rules for the Wireless Providers that resemble the current rules in G.O. 133-E are necessary, Staff has also not shown why *more onerous* versions of those rules are necessary (or reasonable). Specifically,

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[20] It is unclear whether SBUA actually reviewed the report it purportedly relies on for its comments.
[21] *SBUA Opening Comments*, Attachment A at 1 (emphasis added).
[22] Federal Communications Commission, "Voice Telephone Services: Status as of June 30, 2025," at Figure 1, available at: https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-421558A1.pdf (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026).
[23] The number may be even higher now given that an entire year has passed.
[24] *Utility Reform Network v. Public Utilities Comm'n* (2014) 223 Cal.App.4th 945, 940 ("[T]he Commission's finding of need is unsupported by substantial evidence, because it relies on uncorroborated hearsay materials the truth of which is disputed and which do not come within any exception to the hearsay rule. Under established California law, such uncorroborated hearsay evidence does not constitute substantial evidence to support an administrative agency's finding of fact.").
[25] *CTIA Opening Comments* at 33.
[26] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 4.

Staff recommends a vague and restrictive "first prompt" IVR requirement[27] and shortens the callback window from 24 hours to 30 minutes.[28]

Even though there is no record evidence to support new requirements, non-industry groups propose additional recommendations that should be rejected. TURN asks the Commission to require that service providers provide customers the phone number for the Commission's Consumer Affairs Branch ("CAB") when they call to report "service outages or poor to non-existent signals.[29] Reporting of "poor or non-existent signals" would be outside the scope of this proceeding. As the Wireless Providers have repeatedly stated, service *availability* is not the same as service *quality*.[30] And the Commission has no authority to compel the Wireless Providers to expand their coverage.[31] Therefore, to the extent that customers report that they do not have coverage in an area, CAB cannot provide a remedy.

Cal Advocates also recommends, among other things, changing the callback requirement for "non-urgent calls only" from 30 minutes to three hours. As an initial matter, Staff does not explain why a 3 hour standard is appropriate for "non-urgent calls," what the definition of "unanticipated high volumes" is, or how that should be measured.[32] However, Verizon agrees with AT&T that "[t]he Staff Proposal measures success by the speed with which a caller reaches any live representative, rather than the speed with which the caller reaches the appropriate resource capable of resolving their issue."[33] For these reasons, Verizon agrees with Cal Advocates that identifying call-types through initial routing via service providers' IVR systems would "reduce misdirected transfers."[34] The Staff's recommended "first prompt" mandate would prevent such initial routing. Further, this initial IVR routing would be needed not only to identify the urgency of a call but also to determine the customer's location in some cases to assess the

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[27] *CTIA Opening Comments* at 18 ("The Staff Proposal never explains why the "substantial annual cost" it cites to meet the 60 second requirement with an IVR in place is justified . . . its attempt to address this issue via Clarification #1 essentially guarantees some or all of that increased cost.").
[28] *CTIA Opening Comments* at 19 (noting that "there is no record basis to demonstrate this 98% reduction [to the callback window] is reasonable.").
[29] *TURN Opening Comments* at 14.
[30] *See, e.g.*, *AT&T Opening Comments* at 24-26; *CTIA Opening Comments* at 26-27.
[31] Additionally, this suggestion ignores all discussion of how difficult it is to obtain permits in many areas of California that would even allow service providers to expand their coverage in certain areas.
[32] Creating a second callback function could result in additional development and personnel costs that service providers have not had an opportunity to calculate. Any proposed new rules that envisions such a two-tier system must consider additional comment and evidence from wireless providers.
[33] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 8.
[34] *Cal Advocates Opening Comments* at 6.

customer's inquiry in that area and provide information on things such as current status of an outage. As CTIA explains, "[c]ustomers benefit from the specialized care they receive from agents trained in specific areas, and wireless providers are able to route customers to those agents most efficiently and quickly by using IVR systems."[35]

Additionally, Cal Advocates reintroduces a 10-second Chatbot requirement (which was rejected in the predecessor proceeding) and recommends reducing the billing-related complaint resolution window to 45 days.[36] Neither of these suggestions should be adopted. First, the Chatbot recommendation should be rejected outright as the Commission already weighed the merits of this proposal and correctly declined to adopt it.[37] Second, Cal Advocates' recommendation for a 45-day billing dispute resolution period appears to be completely arbitrary. The only reasoning Cal Advocates provides is that "[a] shorter billing window would force carriers to resolve billing issues sooner, and customers would not have to wait three billing cycles."[38] Service providers have already provided detailed information regarding the handling of disputes and the goal of resolving them as soon as possible. This is imperative given the competitive nature of the wireless market; if a customer can't get resolution, they will switch to another provider. An artificial and unvetted timeframe does not account for more complex issues that need additional time to resolve, or any incentives the providers offer customers to make them whole while such an issue is being addressed.[39] Moreover, as CTIA explains, such a billing resolution requirement would "trigger strict scrutiny" under the First Amendment, which would require the Commission to demonstrate that such a mandate is the "'least restrictive' means of advancing 'compelling' state interests."[40] The Staff Proposal does not meet such requirements. Finally, the Commission already considered, and properly, rejected a shorter billing resolution

[35] *CTIA Opening Comments* at 18.
[36] *See Cal Advocates Opening Comments* at 8-9.
[37] D.25-09-031 at 195 (holding that "in response to several carriers, we delete the requirement that any chat bot or automated system must provide an option to speak to a live representative within the first ten seconds of the connection being made.").
[38] *Cal Advocates Opening Comments* at 9.
[39] At best, Cal Advocates says that a 90-day period "may" be too long for a wireless customer to wait but does not explain why wireless services should be subject to a shorter period than what is in G.O. 133-E. *Id.* at 8. *See also AT&T Opening Comments* at 16, n.40 (providing examples showing complexity of billing disputes).
[40] *CTIA Opening Comments* at 48, *citing United States v. Playboy Ent. Grp., Inc.*, 529 U.S. 803, 823, 836 (2000).

timeframe in the prior rulemaking,[41] and Cal Advocates does not identify any changed facts or new evidence justifying a shorter timeframe.

While Verizon agrees with RCRC and CforAT that "clarifications regarding potential exceptions to the penalty and refund provisions" are needed,[42] Verizon opposes their attempt to resurrect automatic credits from the predecessor proceeding as such credits would be preempted rate regulation.[43] RCRC and CforAT's recommendations are very wireline centric and do not account for the differences between fixed and mobile voice services.

III. THE PROPOSED OUTAGE STANDARDS AND NON-INDUSTRY PARTIES' PROPOSED EXPANSION OF THESE STANDARDS ARE INADEQUATELY DEFINED, UNSUPPORTED, AND UNREASONABLE, AND WOULD FAIL TO PREVENT OUTAGES WHILE IMPOSING EXCESSIVE COSTS.

The record establishes that the proposed Cal OES Community Isolation Outage standard ("Outage Metric") and the proposed Network Availability by Public Use Microdata Area ("PUMA") standard are wholly unsupported, unreasonable, and would not meet a cost-benefit analysis as required by Public Utilities Code Section 321.1. Cal Advocates' and other parties' proposals for automated credits should be rejected as unreasonable, impractical, and without foundation in the record.

A. There is No Reasonable Basis to Adopt the Proposed Cal OES Community Isolation Outage.

The record and the Staff Proposal do not justify the proposed Outage Metric. As CTIA explains in its comments, the Wireless Providers' aggregate average annual uptime has exceeded 99% over the past five years, and the providers' average aggregate number of zip codes in Cal OES Community Isolation Outages have fallen from 2023-2025.[44] Other parties similarly highlight the Staff Proposal's own conclusion that the average number of aggregate wireless Cal OES Community Isolation Outage reports (and lengthier outages specifically) fell during 2023-

[41] D.25-09-031 at 155 ("In response to AT&T, billing-related inquiries must be addressed and, if necessary, reconciled within 90 days, instead of the 30 days in the Staff Proposal.").

[42] *RCRC/CforAT Opening Comments* at 7; Verizon further agrees with Cal Advocates that for times when there are unanticipated high volumes of calls, "the Commission could consider applying the existing exemptions from G.O. 133-E's customer service standard." *See Cal Advocates Opening Comments* at 7

[43] *RCRC/CforAT Opening Comments* at 7; *see also* R.22-03-016, *CTIA Opening Comments On Phase One Staff Proposal* at 9-11.

[44] *CTIA Opening Comments* at 8, 10. Verizon submitted its Cal OES outage data to CTIA's outside counsel for aggregation of this data with other providers' data. *See* Declaration of Andis Kalnins.

2025.[45] T-Mobile highlights that Staff even conceded that the "[outage] restoration rate is actually quite solid."[46] Instead of relying on these facts, Staff relied on "evidentiarily inadequate statements – mostly concerning isolated incidents (such as dropped calls or failure to obtain a signal when using a mobile phone) – [which] are merely anecdotal, lack relevant details, and do not support the need for a rule prohibiting and penalizing outages of more than 24 hours."[47] Although TURN claims that the Outage Metric is necessary for consumers who need to call 911,[48] Verizon and others explain that the FCC's "Must Carry Rule" requires wireless 911 calls to be carried on other providers' networks to the extent that a customer's provider network is not in service.[49] Finally, comments complaining about "service gaps," "limited coverage in rural, tribal, and underserved communities" reveal concerns with *lack of coverage*, and not with the quality of wireless service.[50]

The record further demonstrates that the proposed Outage Metric is impractical and would not prevent lengthy outages. AT&T and T-Mobile confirm that many outages are "caused by matters completely outside the provider's control."[51] Verizon's analysis shows that of zip codes experiencing four or more outages exceeding 24 hours in 2025, *all* of the outages were due to factors beyond control and not easily addressed within 24 hours.[52] TURN claims that compliance with existing Commission backup power and disaster recovery rules (*e.g.*, use of deployable cell sites) would facilitate the Wireless Providers' compliance with the 24-hour requirement.[53] TURN's simplistic rationale seems to be that (1) power loss is the principal cause of long-duration outages, and therefore (2) more wireless provider investment in power restoration and deployable sites will ensure compliance. However, TURN understates the impact

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[45] *See CTIA Opening Comments* at 3-4; *AT&T Opening Comments* at 27-29; *T-Mobile Opening Comments* at 6, 10; *Verizon Opening Comments* at 15.
[46] *T-Mobile Opening Comments* at 11.
[47] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 23. On the other hand, the Staff Proposal fails to acknowledge individuals making positive statements about wireless service, including as AT&T described, "Mariposa County Supervisor Kiser (at the July 15, 2026 PPH) [who] stated that '[w]e have a wireless system that actually works quite well. . . . Wireless service today is already affordable for small businesses and families like mine, especially in remote quarters of our state.'" *AT&T Opening Comments* at 28.
[48] *TURN Opening Comments* at 2.
[49] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 33; *T-Mobile Opening Comments* at 12-13; *Verizon Opening Comments* at 15.
[50] *Verizon Opening Comments* at 14, n. 55; *AT&T Opening Comments* at 24-25.
[51] *T-Mobile Opening Comments* at 16; *see also AT&T Opening Comments* at 35.
[52] *Verizon Opening Comments* at 15.
[53] *TURN Opening Comments* at 5.

of factors other than loss of power on a site's operations, overstates the extent to which restoring or maintaining electrical power will expedite wireless service restoration, and ignores the significance of accessibility in restoring service.

The FCC's daily Disaster Information Reporting System ("DIRS") status reports for Hurricane Helene on which TURN relies to support its argument, and the wireless industry's experience after Hurricane Helene, highlight the *infeasibility* of the 24-hour standard. TURN asserts that the DIRS data in those reports "indicates that following a major [multi-state] hurricane . . . the majority of cell site outages were caused by loss of power, and many sites continued to operate on backup power."[54] But TURN engages in the same obscuring of localized issues and impacts that it cautions against later in its comments.[55] The FCC's Hurricane Helene report for October 15, 2024, for example, shows that in certain impacted North Carolina counties, sites were out of service overwhelmingly due to loss of backhaul/transport, not backup power.[56] This was the case for several of the hardest hit areas for several days including Buncombe, Henderson and Rutherford Counties.[57]

The fact that a lower percentage of sites were out of service due to transport loss on a given day in a given county does not support TURN's argument. The FCC's report for October 1, 2024, for example, shows that while over half of sites were out of service in Buncombe County North Carolina (117 of 215 total) due to power loss early on during the DIRS activation, 89 sites were also out of service due to loss of transport—over 40 percent.[58] Severe flooding, mudslides, and washed-out roads and related law enforcement roadblocks wiped out miles of

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[54] *TURN Opening Comments* at 5. Note that more recent FCC DIRS reports note that a site reported as out of service due to power *may* also suffer from transport loss. *See, e.g.*, FCC, "Communications Status Report for Areas Impacted by Hurricane Lowell" (Sept. 14, 2026), available at: https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-425006A1.pdf (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026).

[55] *TURN Opening Comments* at 7.

[56] FCC, "Communications Status Report for Areas Impacted bv Hurricane Helene" (Oct. 15, 2024), available at: https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-406585A1.pdf (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026).

[57] Individual daily reports are posted at https://www.fcc.gov/helene. More recently, for Hurricane Lowell in Hawaii, daily FCC reports indicate that on most days, the majority of macro site outages on the island/county of Kauai were due to loss of transport rather than backup power. *See* FCC, "Hurricane Lowell," available at: https://www.fcc.gov/lowell (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026).

[58] *See* FCC, "Communications Status Report for Areas Impacted bv Hurricane Helene" (Oct. 15, 2024), available at: https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-406585A1.pdf (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026)

fiber and rendered many areas inaccessible for utility crews for several days in Western North Carolina.[59]

The FCC's Hurricane Helene reports and industry's experience after that event thus show the importance of site access on service restoration times, fully consistent with Verizon's comments.[60] The 24-hour standard is applied at a highly granular geographic level (as is the PUMA-based network availability standard). Thus, a few inaccessible macro sites out of service in a single, hard-hit ZIP Code area would set the 24-hour clock in motion; but until debris is cleared, roads are repaired, or law enforcement allows access to an area, restoring service to the site is infeasible.[61] And once access is available, additional time is necessary to restore service. Downed fiber takes time to repair or replace. Repairing and replacing downed utility poles that carry fiber lines is dependent on an electric utility's resources, and reattaching power lines on new or repaired poles takes precedence over fiber.[62] And the challenges posted by site access are not limited to backhaul/transport outages but, contrary to TURN's arguments, apply to power restoration and deployable delivery as well. The inability to deliver a portable generator to a location or to refuel a permanent on-site generator after battery power runs out, or to haul a

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[59] *See, e.g.*, Verizon, "Hurricane Helene Updates," at "10.5.24 Morning Update," available at: https://www.verizon.com/about/news/hurricane-helene-updates, (on October 5,"[i]n the hardest hit area of Chimney Rock and Lake Lure, engineers are just today able to get access for equipment to move in, so our engineers are on site assessing the extent of the damage and starting repairs.") (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026); *see also* North Carolina Department of Transportation, "NCDOT Urges People to Avoid Travel in Western N.C." (Sept. 28, 2024), available at: https://www.ncdot.gov/news/press-releases/Pages/2024/2024-09-28-avoid-traveling-western-nc-recovery-helene.aspx (nearly 400 roads in western North Carolina "remain closed due to flooding, downed trees, landslides or catastrophic damage") (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026); *see also* Broadband Breakfast, "ISPs Helping Recovery from Deadline Hurricane Helene" (Oct. 2, 2024), available at: https://broadbandbreakfast.com/isps-helping-recovery-from-deadly-hurricane-helene/ ("Verizon reported that its engineers are making progress in upstate South Carolina and east Georgia, but areas like Asheville, North Carolina, where landslides caused by flooding damaged key fiber lines, remain among the most challenging.") (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026). This experience is not atypical in major disasters.

[60] *Verizon Opening Comments* at 15-17, 21-22.

[61] Looking at Hurricane Helene as an example of the challenges the Commission's geographically granular formula would pose, Buncombe County, North Carolina includes all or parts of 24 Zip Codes in less than 700 square miles.

[62] When Verizon experienced multiple vandalism-related fiber cuts affecting service in Southern California last month, Verizon was able to promptly identify and access the location and focus personnel and equipment resources to restoring service. *See* NBC Los Angeles, "Verizon service restored for SoCal customers after outage caused by vandalized fiber lines" (Aug. 9, 2026), available at: https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/verizon-disrupted-service-vandalism/3927460/ (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026). But those repairs took several hours and if some of those locations been inaccessible for a single day meeting the 24-hour period would have been infeasible.

deployable tower to a site, will have the same practical impact as lack of access to a fiber backhaul cut.

CTIA's analysis of wireless aggregated FCC Network Outage Reporting System ("NORS") reports filed in 2023-2025 confirms that "[n]early half are due to backhaul failure, including theft and vandalism —a category for which California suffers significantly more than any other state in the nation."[63] Staff analyzed causes of wireless NORS outages in the predecessor rulemaking, and concluded the primary cause of outages are "hardware failure" which it described in a footnote as encompassing "*cable damage, cable damage/malfunction*, and hardware failure."[64] Despite previously reviewing data that identified backhaul failure as a significant cause of wireless outages, Staff did not analyze the primary causes of wireless outages again in this proceeding, and instead, simply recommends a strict 24-hour outage restoration standard without exemptions. As CTIA notes, Staff fails to "grapple with crucial, 'real-world' factors that directly influence whether outages occur and how long they last,"[65] and unreasonably proposes penalties on top of this incomplete analysis.

The mere existence of outages (which inevitably occur for a variety of reasons often beyond providers' control) does not justify such an unprecedented and impractical standard. Public Utilities Code section 321.1(b) requires the Commission to "take all necessary and appropriate actions to assess the economic effects of its decisions." This necessarily includes conducting a meaningful cost-benefit analysis of proposed standards, and disclosing that analysis so that the parties have an opportunity to review it, before rushing forward to adopt a new metric. Because the causes of lengthy outages are often due to factors that are unpreventable or uncontrollable, the benefits of such a standard would be minimal, at best. On the other hand, the record establishes that the costs to comply with the Outage Metric would be in the billions, on an aggregated wireless provider basis. Specifically, CTIA's comments calculated that the wireless industry in total estimates recurring costs of $6.214 billion, and $16.791 billion in one-time costs, to comply with this proposed standard.[66] In fact, as discussed further below, Verizon did

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[63] *CTIA Opening Comments* at 8-9. Verizon submitted its NORS causation data to CTIA's outside counsel for aggregation of industry data. *See* Declaration of Andis Kalnins.
[64] *See ALJ Ruling Requesting Comment on Staff Report* (Apr. 17, 2023), *Service Quality Outage Analysis* at 27, n. 53 (emphasis added). Instead of identifying cable damage (backhaul for wireless sites) is a significant factor for wireless outages, Staff grouped this cause with "hardware failure."
[65] *CTIA Opening Comments* at 4.
[66] *CTIA Opening Comments* at 37.

not include certain costs in its estimate, which if included, would further drive up these total industry costs.

Further compounding the unreasonableness of the proposed Outage Metric, Cal Advocates and other non-industry parties argue for automated credits to be required for outages missing the standard.[67] The Staff appropriately excluded customer credits from its proposal here, and the record in R.22-03-016 demonstrated that automated outage credits would be difficult to implement and preempted by federal law.[68] Verizon explained that it does not report affected numbers of subscribers in their Cal OES outage reports, nor is it possible to identify precisely each customer who may be affected by an outage.[69] Moreover, such a proposed requirement is unnecessary, because Verizon has a refund policy for customers who contact it if they were affected by an outage exceeding 24 hours.[70]

B. There Is No Record Support for the Network Availability by PUMA Standard, and It Is Also Vague and Must be Clarified Before Meaningful Evidence and Comments Can Be Provided.

Multiple parties in addition to Verizon (including non-industry parties) request clarification on a foundational aspect of the proposed metric: the definition of "availability." AT&T states it "does not understand the proposed Network Availability standard," while T-Mobile observes the Staff's inability to explain what "network availability" means.[71] Even Cal Advocates and TURN seek explicit guidance on the term "availability," with TURN asking for "a word-based definition to develop this standard and ensure that the Commission and stakeholders all understand what the Network Availability Standard is intended to measure."[72] AT&T correctly concludes that "the Commission cannot adopt a proposed Network Availability standard that Staff itself cannot even define."[73] The Staff should clarify this fundamental

[67] *See, e.g.*, *Cal Advocates Opening Comments* at 2; *RCRC/CforAT Opening Comments* at 6-7; *SBUA Opening Comments* at 2-3.
[68] *See, e.g.*, R.22-03-016, *Verizon Comments on Phase One Staff Proposal* (Sept. 3, 2024) at 17-21, 31-33; R.22-03-016, *CTIA Opening Comments On Phase One Staff Proposal* at 9-11.
[69] *See Verizon Response to Section 5 of OIR* (Apr. 1, 2026) at 18. For example, Verizon's network would not identify any customers who, among other things, travel into an outage area, did not have their cell phones turned on, or were in an elevator or location where signal was lost, after an outage occurs. *See also* Workshop 1 at 3:10:31-3:11:32 (Kalnis).
[70] Workshop 1 at 3:11:33-3:11:52 (Kalnis).
[71] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 39; *T-Mobile Opening Comments* at 21.
[72] *TURN Opening Comments* at 8.
[73] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 39.

definition and provide parties a further opportunity to comment and provide evidence on the record before it closes.

Given the ambiguity of the term, parties can only offer conjecture at this point on the reasonableness or potential costs of the proposed rule. If Staff intends for the definition of "availability" to consider strictly the "uptime" of a cell site—such as when the "cell site … [is] simultaneously powered on, connected to active backhaul, and actively transmitting radio frequency carrier signals"[74] as Cal Advocates recommends—this definition would ignore that some customers experience no material disruption to service if there is overlapping coverage. Since the Wireless Providers generally design their networks with overlapping coverage where feasible and necessary, a strict and myopic view of "availability" would penalize providers for every single cell site outage, even where there is no customer impact.

The proposed standard would be infeasible to comply with, regardless of how it is defined. Wireless networks largely operate at 99% on an average *annual* basis, but have not claimed that they could do so on a *daily* or site-specific basis. Indeed, AT&T indicated that PUMAs listed in the Staff Proposal met the 99% standard on both an annual and monthly basis.[75] However, AT&T also explained that the proposed Network Availability standard—if based purely on uptime—means that "a carrier shall be found to be out of compliance if only 1% of its network in any given PUMA is inoperative on any day, even for a few short hours (depending on how many macro sites the carrier operates in that PUMA)."[76] Verizon similarly noted that such a standard would mean that a provider might be penalized if there are even minor outages of greater than 14.4 minutes for each cell site within a PUMA daily.[77]

If the definition of "availability" is intended to include overlapping coverage, this would also be problematic and impractical. First, it would require the Wireless Providers to revise their network monitoring systems to measure overlapping coverage for each cell site within a PUMA and redesign current network outage triage processes. Second (as discussed for the Outage Metric), it would penalize providers for outages that cannot be prevented or controlled. In this regard, the non-industry parties' comments reveal an unrealistic and quixotic view of how wireless networks should operate and a misguided layman's attempt to micromanage such

[74] *Cal Advocates Opening Comments* at 4.
[75] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 44-45.
[76] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 40.
[77] *Verizon Opening Comments* at 21.

networks. Cal Advocates claims that "carriers bear the ultimate responsibility to maintain backup power and network redundancy."[78] Cal Advocates' assertions are untrue and unreasonable. Wireless providers do not run electric networks and should not bear the responsibility of electric utilities.[79]

In addition to seeking a definition of "availability," some of the non-industry parties advocated for a more granular monitoring mechanism than the PUMA. Specifically, TURN, RCRC, and CforAT recommended counties for providing more localized data.[80] As Verizon and others stated, however, the Commission already has access to more granular outage data that provides local and specific information — the Cal OES outage reports that reflect outage impacts to a provider's coverage within a ZIP code.[81] In fact, the Cal OES outage reports provide the very "area-weighted geographic coverage formula" that Cal Advocates recommends.[82] Verizon does not support the Outage Metric with penalties or layering a new network availability standard based on ZIP codes, but nothing prevents the Commission from monitoring wireless network outages or availability today on a granular basis using wireless Cal OES outage reports.

Finally, not only is it infeasible for the Wireless Providers to comply with a *daily* strict liability network availability standard, but it would also be unduly punitive and unreasonable to impose two penalties for wireless outages,[83] particularly when similar standards have not been imposed on wireline providers. Other parties besides Verizon also stated that the proposed penalty is duplicative and that providers would essentially be penalized twice in many instances for the same outages.[84] Although the Wireless Providers strive to maintain their networks at all times, they should not be penalized for failing to achieve strict standards of perfection.

The Commission must also review the costs and benefits for this proposed standard as required by Public Utilities Code Section 321.1. As discussed above, the benefits would be nominal, because wireless outages can occur and the proposed metric would attempt to control even a minor service disruption. CTIA estimates that the costs to achieve the daily 99% Network

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[78] *Cal Advocates Opening Comments* at 4-5.
[79] Of course, Verizon has significant backup power capacity to ensure that its networks remain in operation during power outages; however, it is unreasonable to place the sole responsibility for maintaining power to the network on the Wireless Providers.
[80] *RCRC/CforAT Opening Comments* at 4-5; *TURN Opening Comments* at 7.
[81] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 32; *CTIA Opening Comments* at 16; *Verizon Opening Comments* at 20-21.
[82] *Cal Advocates Opening Comments* at 5.
[83] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 41-43; *CTIA Opening Comments* at 16-17.
[84] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 41-43.

Availability standard would be roughly the same as the costs to attempt compliance with the Outage Metric. Verizon noted that it could only roughly estimate the costs to comply with the Network Availability standard, but upon review of other comments, Verizon believes that its costs would be even greater than it had previously estimated. Verizon's cost estimate focused primarily on supplementing its existing backup power resources and adding wireless mobile assets and cellular equipment, but did not include costs to construct redundant cell sites or a redundant backhaul network, which may be required to attempt to meet the strict liability standard of the Outage Metric, and would certainly be required for the Network Availability standard. The 99% daily Network Availability by PUMA standard essentially requires a network to achieve nearly 100% performance on a daily basis, and would require building a network with multiple redundancies to meet such a standard. Verizon estimates that this would drive its previously estimated costs exponentially. In any event, such a redundant network is infeasible due to restrictions related to RF, zoning, and available siting.

The cell site permitting process alone is time and resource-intensive, and often results in denials, which the Wireless Providers must then challenge, incurring great legal expenses to do so. Not so coincidentally, some of the communities that complain of insufficient coverage also oppose deployment of cell sites. For example, Verizon sought and was denied permits to install wireless sites in Amador County in 2024, and Lake County in 2015.[85] Even if feasible, buildout of a redundant network would take decades to complete. It generally takes two to five years to design a single cell site within a network, procure appropriate land or leases; obtain environmental reviews and approvals; apply for and receive zoning or other permits; and then construct the site.

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[85] *See* Ledger Dispatch, "Volcano residents win fight against proposed cell tower" (Jun. 14, 2024), available at: https://www.ledger.news/news/volcano-residents-win-fight-against-proposed-cell-tower/article_4e08c268-2a81-11ef-a48c-e39165919247.html (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026); *see also* Lake County News, "Lakeport City Council overturns Verizon cell tower approval" (Dec. 3, 2015), available at: https://lakeconews.com/en/44329-lakeport-city-council-overturns-verizon-cell-tower-approval (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026).

IV. THE SIGNAL PROPAGATION MAP PROPOSED RULE AND NON-INDUSTRY PARTIES' PROPOSED EXPANSION OF THIS RULE ARE UNJUSTIFIED AND UNNECESSARY AND WOULD FAIL TO ACHIEVE THE PROFFERED GOALS.

Parties supporting the misguided Signal Propagation Map proposal mistakenly believe that the signal propagation maps will accurately depict coverage for every consumer,[86] but as Verizon explained, such maps are best used for predictive purposes and not to confirm whether coverage exists at a given location.[87] As explained in Verizon's and AT&T's opening comments, the most reliable method for customers to confirm if they have reliable coverage in areas where they live and work is to take advantage of providers' free trial periods.[88]

In addition, signal propagation maps (updated semi-annually) are already downloadable from the FCC's website; the FCC's broadband propagation heat maps show coverage at Reference Signal Received Power ("RSRP") signal levels in 10 dBm increments for every 4G LTE or 5G New Radio ("NR") map.[89] Areas identified as having 4G data coverage also meet the criteria for voice coverage. The opening comments of T-Mobile and Verizon also identify third-party maps that display signal strength at RSRP thresholds and allow consumers to compare providers.[90] Commenters suggesting that consumers need more granular maps do not explain why publicly available information does not meet that purported need. Rather than unnecessarily requiring providers to post signal propagation maps at Commission-mandated levels, Verizon agrees with AT&T's suggestion that the Commission implement a customer resource page providing customers with information about how to interpret wireless coverage maps, the relevant factors that may impact coverage, and what resources are available to evaluate service options, including the FCC maps.[91]

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[86] *See, e.g.*, *Cal Advocates Opening Comments* at 9 (claiming that "websites depicting service coverage areas are insufficient to inform customers where they can reasonably expect to place or receive a voice call."); *RCRC/CforAT Opening Comments* at 8 (supporting maps "so that customers have access to quantifiable and verifiable information on signal strength"); *TURN Opening Comments* at 14 (claiming that it is "important for consumers, who need accurate information about the quality of service at their home, or other locations where they need service to be available.").

[87] *Verizon Opening Comments* at 24.

[88] *Verizon Opening Comments* at 23-24; *AT&T Opening Comments* at 48-49; *see also T-Mobile Opening Comments* at 35-36, n. 110 (T-Mobile also "allows customers to test T-Mobile's network for free for up to 30 days.").

[89] *Verizon Opening Comments* at 25.

[90] *T-Mobile Opening Comments* at 34-35; *Verizon Opening Comments* at 25-26.

[91] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 57.

Nor would the Signal Propagation map be useful "to expedite the permitting process on developing a new cell site location to close any coverage gaps and ensure that consumers do not lose coverage over wide swaths of geography," as Cal Advocates claims.[92] Local communities are already aware of where there may be coverage gaps, the Wireless Providers already submit such maps through the permitting approval process, and the local communities can currently work with providers to approve cell sites under the existing permitting approval process. However, neither these local communities, nor the Commission, have authority to compel the building of cell sites.

As the Opening Comments demonstrate, there is a lack of record evidence to support the proposed Signal Propagation Map rule and the proposed RSRP thresholds.[93] As AT&T shows, "[t]here is no evidence in the record that consumers want or need propagation maps showing whether carriers have -84, -100, or -113 dBm coverage in any area of California."[94] T-Mobile and Verizon also show that this proposed rule lacks a reliable evidentiary foundation.[95] In addition, T-Mobile explains that there are no uniform dBm levels for outdoor, in-vehicle, and indoor coverage that establish such coverage across all providers and technologies.[96] As the providers' opening comments show, the FCC (the expert agency that reviews signal propagation maps) determined that multiple facts impact signal strength, such as spectrum band, network design, and device.[97] As a result, requiring providers to tell customers that specified dBm levels equate to specific coverage would be inaccurate and potentially misleading.[98]

Not satisfied with this onerous new requirement, certain non-industry parties recommend that the proposed Signal Propagation Map rule be expanded to require validation of the mandated maps by third parties, the Commission, and/or customers displaying indoor, in-vehicle, and

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[92] *Cal Advocates Opening Comments* at 15-16.
[93] *See AT&T Opening Comments* at 48; *T-Mobile Opening Comments* at 35; *Verizon Opening Comments* at 24.
[94] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 48.
[95] *T-Mobile Opening Comments* at 35 (the Staff Proposal does not show that its proposed Signal Propagation Map "would provide meaningful benefits to consumers" and Staff "did not undertake any surveys and did not rely on any other data to support this recommendation."); *Verizon Opening Comments* at 24 ("There is no evidence, however, that customers need the type of maps proposed by CD Staff.").
[96] *T-Mobile Opening Comments* at 31.
[97] *In the Matter of Establishing the Digital Opportunity Data Collection Modernizing the FCC Form 477 Data Program*, WC Docket Nos. 19-195, 11-10, Third Report and Order, FCC 21-20 (rel. Jan. 19, 2021) at ¶ 37; *T-Mobile Opening Comments* at 31-32; *Verizon Opening Comments* at 25.
[98] *T-Mobile Opening Comments* at 32-33.

outdoor coverage at the Commission-specified RSRP thresholds.[99] As an initial matter, this additional unnecessary intrusion on the Wireless Providers' practices is not premised on an evidentiary basis and incorrectly questions the providers' veracity by assuming that providers would not comply with the proposed Signal Propagation Map rule. Cal Advocates' proposal that providers be required to pay for independent validation[100] is particularly problematic as this would unfairly penalize providers without evidence of any compliance failures. Moreover, the proposal assumes that such maps could *ensure* that a certain type of coverage always exists at a given location, which as noted above, is incorrect.

In support of its claim that providers must pay for third-party validation, Cal Advocates only cites to the Staff Proposal's Executive Summary stating that "[a]s detailed later in this proposal, community leaders, tribal representatives, consumer advocates and the public have raised concerns that current wireless coverage maps frequently misrepresent actual service availability."[101] The rest of the Staff Proposal, however, only identifies *one* public comment at the first workshop that it alleges supports Staff's conclusion that "wireless carriers' published coverage maps tend to overstate the service that the tribal members actually receive."[102] In particular, the Staff Proposal cites Matthew Rantanen, Director of Technology of the Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association, as "stat[ing] that these maps consistently understate gaps in tribal areas, leaving tribal communities among those most likely to be left behind by inaccurate carrier coverage claims."[103] The referenced portion of the workshop recording, however, does not contain this statement. Mr. Rantanen did not comment on the accuracy of the

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[99] *Cal Advocates Opening Comments* at 13 (suggesting validation through either: "(1) require that the carriers submit their maps to a Commission-selected third-party firm using industry standard software, 34 along with the specifications for the equipment, such as operational frequencies, equipment model, equipment mounting height, equipment mounting angle, azimuth, and tilt, equipment power output, and any other metrics that are used to determine the propagation calculations; or (2) require that the carriers submit this same data to the Commission itself for validation."); *RCRC and CforAT Opening Comments* at 10-11 (emphasizing independent verification over carrier-submitted information); *TURN Opening Comments* at 15 (proposing standardized presentation and formatting of maps and more frequent map updates than suggested annual requirement in the Staff Proposal); *SBUA Opening Comments* at 10-11 (proposing a requirement for a "low-friction way for a small business to flag such … discrepanc[ies] without requiring a formal complaint process.").
[100] *Id.* at 13-14.
[101] *Staff Proposal* at 3.
[102] *Staff Proposal* at 17.
[103] *Id.* (*citing* June 25, 2026 ("Workshop 1") at 03:38:37, 03:39:32, available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVghVVwAA-g (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026).

providers' maps and instead raised concerns about providers' "lack of total coverage" in tribal areas, which he admitted are "hard to serve" and he urged providers to provide coverage to tribal areas.[104] As explained in Verizon's, AT&T's and CTIA's opening comments, the enormous costs and penalties associated with the Staff Proposal's proposed new rules would discourage providers from bridging the digital divide and expanding coverage to harder to serve areas.[105] The only other public comment identified in the Staff Proposal relating to providers' maps is a PPH comment of Pete Stiglech of Cottonwood where he requested "transparency requirements for marketing maps."[106] This comment, however, does not raise any concerns about the accuracy of providers' maps.

RCRC and CforAT claim that "consumer-reported information could help identify areas where additional validation, analysis, or network improvements may be warranted, while providing carriers with useful insights into coverage gaps and indoor service challenges that may not otherwise be captured."[107] They also claim that a consumer-reporting validation process would benefit providers by "providing a less adversarial, nonpunitive avenue to identify and address potential service issues before they require formal complaint or enforcement proceedings."[108] Validation could not achieve these proffered purposes. Because multiple factors impact signal strength as the FCC, RCRC, and CforAT recognize,[109] it would not be possible for the Commission-mandated RSRP thresholds to precisely translate to indoor, in-vehicle, or outdoor coverage for every customer. Therefore, even if the map correctly displays the Commission-prescribed RSRP thresholds, an individual customer may still not have coverage due to the many factors that impact signal strength, particularly indoors. Thus, a validation process would impose unnecessary costs and burdens on providers that cannot be justified by any potential benefits.

[104] Workshop 1 at 03:37:41-03:37:45, 03:38:08-03:38:42, 03:39:12-03:39:48.
[105] *Verizon Opening Comments* at 22; *AT&T Opening Comments* at 65-66; *CTIA Opening Comments* at 45-46, Exhibit A.
[106] *Staff Proposal* at 25 (*citing* July 15, 2026 PPH Transcript at 20).
[107] *RCRC/CforAT Opening Comments* at 11.
[108] *Id.* at 11-12.
[109] *In the Matter of Establishing the Digital Opportunity Data Collection Modernizing the FCC Form 477 Data Program*, WC Docket Nos. 19-195, 11-10, Third Report and Order, FCC 21-20 (Rel. Jan. 19, 2021) at ¶ 37; *RCRC/CforAT Opening Comments* at 8 ("At the August Workshop, the discussion clarified that the translation of signal strength to service availability and signal quality indoors remains subject to various factors"), 10 (acknowledging that network modifications, "evolving physical conditions on the landscape," and building standards "may affect coverage.").

RCRC's and CforAT's claims also conflate "coverage gaps" with "service issues,"[110] and imply that the maps could be used to identify areas where "network improvements may be warranted" and thus, avoid complaint or enforcement proceedings.[111] As the providers explain in their opening comments, the Staff Proposal likewise conflates "service gaps" and service quality issues.[112] Moreover, for the reasons stated in Verizon's and the providers' opening comments, to the extent that the coverage maps were used by the Commission to dictate network design and deployment, this rule would be subject to federal preemption.[113]

V. THE STAFF PROPOSAL LACKS A RELIABLE EVIDENTIARY FOUNDATION.

A. The Commission Must Provide A Meaningful Opportunity for Parties to Submit Evidence and Comments Should the Commission Make Material Clarifications or Modifications to the Proposed Rules in the Staff Proposal.

As discussed above, both the industry and non-industry parties identify significant ambiguities with the Staff's proposed new rules, including the basic definition of "network availability," and recommend multiple material revisions to the proposed rules. It is clear that Staff has not fully assessed its proposed rules and that substantive changes and clarifications are necessary. Any material clarifications or modifications require additional analysis, evidence, and feedback from the service providers regarding, among other issues, the associated costs, consequences, and feasibility of any modified recommendations and whether the modified rules would violate the law. These procedural safeguards are especially necessary because Staff directed the parties to put any questions regarding its proposed rules "in comments,"[114] and the evidentiary record closes the same day as these reply comments are due—September 15. Denying the Wireless Providers the ability to provide evidence and comments on any such changes before they are presented in a Proposed Decision (to which no new evidence may be submitted), would jeopardize their right to due process rights.[115]

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[110] *RCRC/CforAT Opening Comments* at 11-12.
[111] *Ibid.*
[112] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 24-26; *CTIA Opening Comments* at 26-27; *see also Staff Proposal* at 3-4.
[113] *See*, *e.g.*, *Verizon Opening Comments* at 32; *AT&T Opening Comments* at 26-27; *CTIA Opening Comments* at 39-41.
[114] *See, e.g.*, Workshop 2 at 00:32:08-00:32:32:51 (Lai, Slawson); 00:44:21-00:44:39 (Osborn, Bolanos); 01:14:11-01:14:52 (Lai, Bolanos); 1:19:59-01:20:12 (Osborn, Bolanos); 01:30:48-01:31:39 (Lai, Bloomfield).
[115] *See Verizon Opening Comments on Staff Proposal* at 28-30. In addition, were new rules to be presented for the first time in a Proposed Decision, like they were in the predecessor proceeding, it may yield the same result.

In addition, the record should remain open until the Commission provides the parties with the Commission Staff's workpapers, assumptions, and other supporting documents underlying the Staff Proposal's findings and recommendations, and the parties are afforded a meaningful opportunity to analyze and rebut those documents. As explained in Verizon's Opening Comments, the Wireless Parties promptly sought these workpapers through multiple avenues, including a request at the August 27, 2026 Workshop and an August 28, 2026 informal request to CD staff, which was converted to a California Public Records Act ("CPRA") request. Commissioner Houck responded that the Commission "probably could" provide the workpapers, but they need to consider the procedure to determine what they can provide to other parties given potential confidentiality issues, and would get back to the parties.[116] Although the ALJ issued a protective order on September 2, 2026, the workpapers were not subsequently provided to the parties subject to these confidentiality provisions. On September 8, 2026, the Commission responded to the CPRA request that Staff will provide a complete response or status update to the request by September 22, 2026. As of the date of these reply comments, the Commission has not provided the workpapers.

The Staff Proposal should not be relied upon to adopt service quality rules and penalties if the underlying workpapers and documents supporting the findings, conclusions, recommendations, tables and figures in the Staff Proposal are not provided.[117] The Commission cannot operate in secret, and the Wireless Providers would be deprived of legitimate evidence if Staff's underlying workpapers, calculations, and documents relating to the proposal are not disclosed. As the United States Supreme Court has found, it is a basic principle of jurisprudence that:

[116] Workshop 2 at 37:35-38:40 (Slawson, Lai), 40:01-41:25 (Bloomfield, Houck).
[117] S*ee, e.g., Kaiser Co. v. Industrial Acc. Comm'n* (1952) 109 Cal.App.2d 54, 58 (due process demands the inspection of evidence and a full right to challenge evidence); *Greene v. McElroy* (1959) 360 U.S. 474, 496 (holding that where "governmental action seriously injures an individual, and the reasonableness of the action depends on fact findings, the evidence used to prove the Government's case *must be disclosed* to the individual so that he has an opportunity to show that it is untrue."); *see also Connecticut Light & Power Co. v. NRC* (D.C. Cir. 1982) 673 F.2d 525, 530–31 ("[T]o allow an agency to play hunt the peanut with technical information, hiding or disguising the information that it employs, is to condone a practice in which the agency treats what should be a genuine interchange as mere bureaucratic sport"); *see also Am. Radio Relay League, Inc. v. FCC* (D.C. Cir. 2008) 524 F.3d 227, 237.

> Where governmental action seriously injures an individual, and the reasonableness of the action depends on fact findings, the evidence used to prove the Government's case must be disclosed to the individual so that he has an opportunity to show that it is untrue.[118]

Indeed, the United States Supreme Court held that the Ohio Public Utilities Commission violated "fair hearing essential to due process" when it relied on "information secretly collected and yet never disclosed" that affected the value of a telephone company's property.[119] Without disclosure of the requested workpapers, the Wireless Providers would be deprived of a meaningful opportunity to challenge the proposed rules and severe penalties in the Staff Proposal, which would impose enormous costs and burdens and require them to redesign their networks and customer care operations.

B. The Staff Proposal and Non-Industry Parties Mischaracterize and Disregard the Record Evidence Submitted by the Wireless Providers.

On September 9, 2026, the ALJ issued a ruling denying the Wireless Parties[120] motion for extension of the deadlines in the August 19, 2026 Ruling Issuing Staff Proposal. In the September 9th Ruling, the ALJ asserts:

> Waiting on the hope that the Wireless Parties will now make a good faith effort to provide an informed record is prejudicial to other parties that have already made that good faith effort in this proceeding, and it would not be in the public interest.[121]

This statement is incorrect. Contrary to the ALJ's assertion, the Wireless Parties have actively participated in good faith in this proceeding and produced extensive information and data that the Staff Proposal and parties largely disregard. To ensure the record is clear, Exhibit A lists the information and evidence Verizon has already submitted in this proceeding, which is briefly summarized below:

- In April 2026, in response to the Information Requests in the OIR, Verizon provided comprehensive information, including detailed outage data, descriptions of network and customer care operations, financial data, and cost estimates.[122] Verizon supported

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[118] *Greene*, *supra* 360 U.S. at 496.
[119] *Ohio Bell Tel. Co. v. Pub. Utils. Com.* (1937) 301 U.S. 292, 300.
[120] The Wireless Parties refers to CTIA and the Wireless Providers.
[121] *ALJ Ruling Denying Extension Request of Wireless Parties* (Sept. 9, 2026) at 7-8.
[122] Verizon also served amended responses on June 11, 2026, and June 26, 2026 to supplement and correct prior submissions with additional or corrected data to ensure that the record was accurate and complete.

this information with declarations and verifications of nine witnesses, and also provided comments on the OIR itself.

- In June 2026, the Wireless Parties (including Verizon) provided aggregated industry data on the outage information, which was amended on August 31, 2026 to incorporate some limited data that had inadvertently been excluded in the initial submission.
- Later in June 2026, Verizon and the other Wireless Providers participated in workshop presentations by bringing four internal experts on network and customer care operations and provided detailed slides to the Commission and all parties.
- At the end of July 2026, Verizon provided further information about how network operations and customer care worked, as well as other matters, in response to a July 10, 2026 ALJ Ruling, and supported its factual responses with the declarations and verifications of four witnesses.
- In August 2026, Verizon and the other Wireless Providers participated in the Staff Proposal Workshop that was first released to them one week earlier.
- In early September 2026, Verizon provided comprehensive comments on the Staff Proposal as well as estimated compliance costs, workpapers to support those estimates and other evidence in response to the recommendations in the Staff Proposal. Verizon supported the factual information in its comments and response with the declarations and verifications of four witnesses.

Despite the scope and breadth of the Commission's and ALJ's demands for information, which required more than the allotted time to coordinate with many different business units, identify proper subject matter experts and responsive data, and prepare the responses, Verizon engaged in diligent and extensive efforts, working over weekends and holidays, to timely provide the requested information and data. Given its good faith submission of substantial evidence and information into the record, Verizon is concerned with the unfounded statements in the ALJ's September 9, 2026 Ruling implying that it has not engaged in good faith efforts to inform the record; these statements suggest that Verizon's efforts to provide the data the Commission has requested are being ignored.

For example, the Ruling incorrectly implies that because the "Wireless Parties attended and participated in the June 25 Workshop, they already are aware of the topics discussed."[123] The Staff Proposal was issued for the first time on August 19, 2026. Therefore, the Wireless Providers could not have known of "the topics discussed," in the Staff Proposal on June 25, 2026 before it was even issued. The Staff Proposal advances many brand new regulatory mandates including a vague and undefined Network Availability by PUMA standard and material

[123] *ALJ Ruling Denying Extension Request of Wireless Parties* (Sept. 9, 2026) at 5.

modifications to the Customer Service Standard in G.O. 133-E. In addition, the Ruling incorrectly states that the "Wireless Parties' complaints about the time it would take to answer these questions omit the fact that they were already ordered to respond to the first and third requests" in response to the information requests in the OIR.[124] This statement is also incorrect. The OIR sought compliance cost estimates with respect to the first four subsections of the Customer Care Standard applicable to wireline and VoIP providers under G.O. 133-E as well as impact on customer bills of implementing these subsections. Verizon responded in full to these questions.[125] In contrast, the information requests in the August 19th Ruling sought cost estimates for those same Customer Service Standard subsections, but with the addition of two *new and material* modifications to the standards for which Verizon had already provided its estimates. Moreover, the August 19th Ruling also requested cost estimates for a 24-hour outage repair standard,[126] a Network Availability by PUMA standard (which had never been discussed or referenced in any manner), and a Signal Propagation Map rule. Thus, the OIR did not previously order Verizon to provide all of the granular information sought in the August 19th Ruling.[127]

The September 9th Ruling also asserts that "AT&T, T-Mobile and Verizon also declined to provide estimates regarding the impact on customer bills."[128] This assertion omits that Verizon (and the other Wireless Providers) explained how, in a competitive market, compliance costs do not always translate directly into customer bill impacts, and costs may impact customers "indirectly through reduced investment, innovation, or deployment, which may adversely affect service quality."[129] The assertion also rests on the assumption that monopoly rate-regulation pricing (where utilities were expected to justify rate increases based on the costs of service)

[124] *Id.* at 6.
[125] *Verizon Response to Section 5 of OIR* (April 1, 2026), amended on June 11 and 26, 2026.
[126] While the July 10th ALJ Ruling ordered the Wireless Providers to provide cost estimates of "restoring outage tickets" within 24 hours and other specified timeframes, the Ruling did not define what it meant by "outage ticket," or whether exemptions would apply.
[127] The September 9th Ruling also repeats the same unfounded accusation contained in the ALJ's July 10, 2026 Ruling that the Wireless Providers' April 1 Responses to the OIR's information requests were not fully compliant. Verizon responded to that Ruling and showed that the ALJ Ruling's assertion was incorrect and highlighted where the requested information had been provided in its April 1, 2026 Responses. *See Verizon Response to July 10, 2026 Administrative Law Judge Ruling Ordering AT&T, T-Mobile, and Verizon to Produce Previously Ordered Data* (July 27, 2026) Section II at 2-3 (explaining that Verizon complied with the directives in the OIR).
[128] *ALJ Ruling Denying Extension Request of Wireless Parties* (Sept. 9, 2026) at 7.
[129] *Verizon Response Section 5 to OIR* at 13.

applies to wireless services. As noted, wireless providers are not rate-regulated and do not price their services in that way.

The Ruling further suggests that "[the Wireless Providers] now may want to propound discovery requests on other parties, it should be noted that Wireless Parties have had months to do so, including two months since the June 25, 2026, Workshop."[130] However, the Staff Proposal and Workshop Summary were not released until August 19, 2026 and the video recording of the Workshop was released two days prior to the August 19, 2026 Ruling, even though Verizon had promptly sought a video recording or transcript of the workshop on June 26, 2026. Verizon could not effectively propound discovery on the non-industry parties prior to its receipt of these materials, its understanding of the scope and extent of the Staff Proposal, and the Staff Proposal's reliance on assertions made by non-industry parties at the June 26, 2026 Workshop.

Despite the denial of the extension, on September 1, 2026, CTIA served separate data requests on Cal Advocates, CforAT, SBUA, and TURN seeking data, information, and documents supporting their proposals, including certain statements relied upon in the Staff Proposal. CTIA requested a due date within ten days, or by September 11, 2026, so that it would have sufficient time to incorporate any responses in reply comments. After Cal Advocates and CTIA were unable to reach agreement on an extension request, on September 9, 2026, Cal Advocates' counsel responded that it would not respond until September 18, 2026. The record should thus remain open, to allow CTIA or the Wireless Providers to submit information regarding these forthcoming responses.[131]

In addition, on August 31, 2026, Verizon served a data request on CforAT with a single question seeking clarifications regarding statements made by Mr. Goodman at the June 26, 2026 Workshop. Verizon sought a response by September 4, 2026, but CforAT did not respond until September 11, 2026, explaining that Mr. Goodman was out of the country until September 8,

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[130] *ALJ Ruling Denying Extension Request of Wireless Parties* (Sept. 9, 2026) at 7.

[131] In addition, on September 8, 2026, and September 9, 2026, SBUA and TURN timely responded to CTIA's data requests. Copies of their responses are attached as Exhibits B and C, respectively. These responses show that TURN's and SBUA's assertions in this proceeding rely significantly on stale public comments or reports from the last service quality rulemaking in 2023 and that they did not engage in additional efforts to verify this outdated information. On September 14, 2026, CforAT responded to CTIA's data request, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit D. Rather than providing facts or documents to support CforAT's statements as requested, CforAT generally responded that its claims reflected its "policy position" based on its work in this policy area or that its statements were matters "of general knowledge." Exhibit D.

2026. A copy of CforAT's response is attached as Exhibit E. Verizon's Data Request sought the source data and all documents relied upon by CforAT for Mr. Goodman's statements regarding Verizon's "daily revenue from *California customers*"[132] CforAT's response referred generally to Verizon's Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2023, which contains Verizon's *national* revenues and *national* access lines, as well as a 2023 Cal Chamber article that does not contain the amount of Verizon's California revenues, but refers to the approximate number of Verizon's "accounts in California."[133] On September 11, 2026, Verizon requested clarification regarding how Mr. Goodman determined Verizon's California revenues and California customers. As of the date of these reply comments, Verizon has not received a response. Absent any supporting data or information, Mr. Goodman's statement should not be relied upon.[134] Although Verizon and CTIA have only had time to engage in limited discovery regarding the Staff Proposal, Workshop Summary, and recording given the time constraints imposed by the August 19th Ruling, this response shows the importance of permitting a reasonable timeframe for discovery to test the reliability of claims made at the Workshop.

Additionally, the unfounded statements in September 9th Ruling, and the recent September 11, 2026 ALJ Ruling denying the Wireless Parties Second Motion to Submit Aggregate Data on the ground that "evidence requires an attestation to the truth of the matter from an independent expert witness"[135] raise serious due process and record issues. The Staff Proposal similarly fails to consider evidence submitted at the June 26, 2026 Workshop from the Wireless Providers on their customer-focused, efficient, and flexible customer care operations and IVR routing processes, the enormous costs of implementing the proposed rules, and that many wireless outages are caused by factors outside of the providers' control.[136] Instead, the

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132 Exhibit E (emphasis added).
133 *See* Verizon Annual 10-K for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2023, available at https://www.verizon.com/about/sites/default/files/2023-Annual-Report-on-Form-10k.pdf (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026); CalChamber, "Verizon: Working Together to Close California's Digital Divide" (Feb. 8, 2023), available at https://advocacy.calchamber.com/2023/02/08/verizon-working-together-to-close-californias-digital-divide/ (last accessed Sept. 15, 2026).
134 *See ALJ Ruling Issuing Staff Proposal* (Aug. 19, 2026), Attachment B (summary of the June 25, 2026 workshop) at 9.
135 *ALJ Ruling Denying Wireless Parties' Motion to Submit Evidence* (Sept. 11, 2206) at 1.
136 *See, e.g.*, Workshop 1 at 1:21:34-1:26:15 (Chaffins) (describing Verizon's "customer obsessed" approach to customer service, included scheduled callback option and sophisticated IVR process to "make sure we get you to the right agent and that agent is properly trained" and that the information the customer already provided does not have to be repeated.); Workshop 1 at 3:06:15-3:10:30 (Kalnis) (describing and

Staff Proposal disproportionately relies upon uncorroborated hearsay comments of non-industry parties and public commenters. Based on the ALJ's statement in the September 11th Ruling, however, it would be improper to consider any of these hearsay statements (none of which are verified by an independent expert witness) as evidence. Similarly, the non-industry parties' comments in response to the OIR, July 10th Ruling, and August 19th Ruling, have not been verified by independent expert witnesses. In sharp contrast, the Wireless Providers' responses to the Commission's and ALJ's multiple rounds of information requests have all been verified by subject matter experts.[137]

VI. THE COMMISSION SHOULD ADOPT A REPORTING AND TRANSPARENCY FRAMEWORK AS RECOMMENDED BY AT&T AND VERIZON IN THEIR OPENING COMMENTS.

Because the record does not support the proposed rules in the Staff Proposal and the proposed rules would be subject to multiple legal barriers, the Commission should instead adopt a reporting and transparency framework, without penalties, consistent with the recommendations in AT&T's and Verizon's opening comments.[138] As AT&T highlights, even the Staff Proposal supports the need for additional data collection, stating that "[s]ervice quality standards and reporting transparency are necessary *to determine whether* the carriers advertised network performance translates into reliable service for California customers, including measurable data on network availability, outage duration, restoration time, and coverage."[139] Cal OES likewise suggested a task force or working group to discuss "better reporting" and "what can we get that's a little bit sharper" to identify outages and get resources to the right place.[140] Verizon supports

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providing numerous examples of factors outside of providers' control that cause outages and impact restoration times, including cable damage as the biggest cause in California, such as from improper digging issues, rodent damage, and vandalism); *ALJ Ruling Issuing Staff Proposal* (Aug. 19, 2026), Attachment C (Workshop 1 slides) at PDF p. 90 (listing multiple factors outside of providers' control that impact outages); *Verizon Response to Section 5 of OIR* at 6, 10-13, Confidential Exhibits 6-7, and Declaration of Connie Chaffins (explaining customer service operational processes providing estimated costs of complying with Customer Service Standard in G.O. 133-E with and without the use of IVR); *Verizon Response to OIR* at 9-10 (explaining Verizon's existing network KPIs and customer service standards); *Verizon Response to July 10, 2026 ALJ Ruling* at 6-9 (Jul. 27, 2026) (describing Verizon's outage repair practices and estimated costs and measures needed to comply with a strict liability outage repair standard).

[137] The Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure do not require verification of facts by an "*independent*" expert witness.

[138] *AT&T's Opening Comments* at Section IV; *Verizon's Opening Comments* at 3, 44-45.

[139] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 50 (*citing Staff Proposal* at 8).

[140] *Id.* at 54, *citing* Workshop 1 at 2:20:49- 2:21:37 (Andrew Mattson) (emphasis added).

the two to three year reporting frameworks suggested in AT&T's opening comments.[141] This process will facilitate more collaborative and productive workshops to evaluate what the data means, refine reporting, evaluate complex, technical and feasibility issues, consider whether any improvements are needed based on any evidence of recurring problems, and evaluate the best method to address any concerns.[142] As AT&T notes, Staff's observations at the recent workshop "identify a question for further reporting; they do not establish that widespread, recurring, or carrier-caused localized availability problems exist" to justify Staff's proposed outage standards.[143] Verizon agrees with AT&T's specific reporting recommendations, including the following:

- Any network availability reporting requirement should use county-level aggregation and permit carriers to provide relevant information to explain any significant events, including external factors outside of their control.[144] TURN's comments also support county-level network availability where a PUMA contains multiple counties.[145]
- "Billing-related reporting over a two-to-three-year period will allow the Commission to assess whether wireless customers are experiencing systemic billing inquiry resolution problems before considering any modification to existing standards."[146]
- "[C]ustomer outcome reporting," instead of "prescriptive answer-time standards," and annual reports evaluating providers' existing measures (issue resolution, repeat contacts, callback options, customer support channels, access to live support, complaint trends, and customer satisfaction) and an annual workshop to review the data and how to address any issues identified.[147]
- The development of a customer resource page on the Commission website that provides guidance on wireless coverage maps and identifies resources customers can consult when evaluating service options, with links to existing federal coverage resources and other publicly available consumer tools.[148]

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[141] *Id.* at 50-52.
[142] *Id.* at 52 (further explaining that such workshops should also evaluate whether any recurring issues "involve coverage rather than service quality, and whether they are already being addressed through existing operational practices, resiliency planning, customer-facing tools, or competitive market incentives."). The best method may not require service quality rules and network investment, resiliency coordination, customer education, meetings between providers and tribal and rural representatives, and permitting support may be more appropriate to address any issues. *See id.* at 53.
[143] *Id.* at 53.
[144] *Ibid.*
[145] *TURN Opening Comments* at 7.
[146] *AT&T Opening Comments* at 54-55.
[147] *Id.* at 56.
[148] *Id.* at 57.

These steps will ensure that any service quality mandates are based on a robust record as intended in the OIR and will more effectively resolve any compliance issues based on a collaborative approach involving the consideration of data over a reasonable timeframe and the involvement of relevant stakeholders and technical subject matter experts. As explained above and in the Wireless Parties' Opening Comments, the current record is insufficient to adopt any of the proposed rules in the Staff Proposal.

Executed on this 15th day of September 2026.

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Verification of Andis Kalnins in Support of the

REPLY COMMENTS AND RESPONSE OF CELLCO PARTNERSHIP DBA VERIZON WIRELESS (U 3001 C) TO AUGUST 19, 2026 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE RULING ISSUING STAFF PROPOSAL

I, Andis Kalnins, declare as follows:

1. I am an Associate Director of Network Engineering for Verizon, and I am authorized to make this verification on the company's behalf. I am submitting this declaration in support of the Reply Comments and Response of Cellco Partnership (U 3001 C) ("Verizon") to the August 19, 2026 Administrative Law Judge Ruling Issuing Staff Proposal**.** I am authorized to make this declaration pursuant to delegated authority from Meryl Friedman, Assistant Secretary of Verizon.

2. In my role as Associate Director for Verizon, I am responsible for overseeing the submission of outage reports to various regulatory agencies, including the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") and California Office of Emergency Services ("CalOES"). This declaration is based on my personal knowledge or on information and belief based on my many years of experience at Verizon or information provided by members of the Verizon team.

3. Verizon team members and I compiled Verizon's Cal OES Community Isolation Outage Report data from 2021 through 2025 showing the number of Cal OES Community Isolation Outage Reports and duration of outages reported by ZIP code in Cal OES Community Isolation Outage Reports, including the mean outage duration; the annual number of ZIP codes included in these reports; and the number of Verizon's impacted ZIP codes (as reported since October 1, 2022) that had service degradation percentages equal to or greater than 50% to approximate the annual number of ZIP codes that would have been reported under the prior threshold.

4. Verizon team members and I also compiled causation data for Verizon's outages from 2023-2025 based on Verizon's Network Outage Reporting System ("NORS") outage reports.

5. I am informed and believe that the data described in Paragraphs 3 and 4 were only provided to CTIA's outside counsel pursuant to a Common Interest Agreement, and Verizon did not share this confidential information with the other Wireless Providers in this proceeding or with CTIA's internal personnel to preserve its confidentiality.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 14th day of September 2026 at Basking Ridge, NJ.

/s/

Andis Kalnins
Associate Director of Network Engineering

Verification and Declaration of Joel Rioux in Support of the

**REPLY COMMENTS AND RESPONSE OF CELLCO PARTNERSHIP DBA VERIZON WIRELESS (U 3001 C)
TO AUGUST 19, 2026 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE'S
RULING ISSUING STAFF PROPOSAL**

I, Joel Rioux, declare as follows:

1. I am a Senior Director of Network Operations for Verizon and I am authorized to make this verification on the company's behalf. I am submitting this verification and declaration in support of the Reply Comments and Response of Cellco Partnership dba Verizon Wireless ("Verizon") to the August 19, 2026 Administrative Law Judge's Ruling Issuing Staff Proposal (the "Ruling").

2. In my role as Senior Director of Network Operations, I am responsible for maintaining, managing, and upgrading wireless network architecture in the Northern California market. My prior responsibilities include oversight of Verizon's fiber network build in Southern California, network construction activities for macro and small cells in Verizon's Texas market, and serving as a Field Engineer in Verizon's Network Assurance organization.

3. I have read Verizon's Reply Comments and Response to the Ruling (the "Response") and know the contents thereof and I can confirm the factual representations and information in Section III of the regarding the difficulty in meeting the 24-hour outage standard particularly where backhaul is damaged or a site is inaccessible, such as during major disasters; the impacts that the PUMA Network Availability Standard would have on our network operations; the fact that an entirely redundant network may need to be constructed for the PUMA Network Availability Standard, which would further drive costs up exponentially; and the difficult and lengthy process of planning, permitting, and constructing a cell site. This information is true of my own personal knowledge, except as to matters that are not of my personal knowledge, which are based on information and belief, and as to those matters, I believe them to be true based on my many years of experience at Verizon and my review of the information provided by my colleagues.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 15th day of September 2026 at Walnut Creek, CA

/s/

Joel Rioux
Senior Director of Network Operations

Exhibit A

April 1, 2026 Comments on OIR and Response to Section 5 of OIR and Related Amendments			
Section/Attachment/Exhibit	Topic(s)	Declarant(s)	Description
Response to Section III, Question 7 supported by Declaration of Kathleen Albee	CalOES Community Isolation Outage reporting	Kathleen Albee, Senior Director of Business Operations	Section of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s)
Response to Section III, Question 6 supported by Declaration of James Bevlin	Verizon revenue per average California postpaid wireless voice subscriber, California allocation of nationwide wireless postpaid revenues, and Verizon's average numbers of California postpaid wireless voice subscribers from 2023-2025	James Bevlin, Senior Director of Accounting and Finance	Section of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s)
Response to Section III, Question 6 supported by Declaration of Jennifer E. Johnson	Estimate of Verizon's revenue per its average California postpaid wireless voice subscriber from 2023 to 2025	Jennifer N. Johnson, Senior Director of Accounting and Finance	Section of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s)
Response to Section III, Question 1 supported by Declaration of Kerry E. Hannaford	Verizon California capital expenditures	Kerry E. Hannaford, Senior Director of Accounting	Section of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s)
Response to Section III, Question 9 supported by Declaration of Sohaib Faruq	Verizon's ability to identify wireless customers who may disconnect from its network due to equipment failure during outages	Sohaib Faruq, Senior Director of Network Operations	Section of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s)
Response to Section II, Questions 1 through 4 supported by Declaration of Joel Rioux	CalOES reports and macro-cell site build costs, and information in prior declarations	Joel Rioux, Senior Director of Network Operations	Section of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s)
Response to Section III, Question 2 supported by Declaration of Marta Tenold LaCroix	Verizon's key performance indicators for wireless voice services	Marta Tenold LaCroix, Associate Vice President of Network Design	Section of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s)
Response to Section III, Questions 4 and 8 supported by Declaration of Paul Vasington	Cost and other potential negative impacts passed through onto consumers and competition	Paul Vasington, Senior Director of Regulatory and Government Affairs	Section of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s)

	impacts on wireless markets and investment		
Response to Section III, Question 1 supported by Declaration of Bryan Weiss	California operating expenditures	Bryan Weiss, Director Finance Planning and Analysis	Section of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s)
Responses to Section II, Questions 1 through 4; Section III, Questions 2 and 3 supported by Declaration and Amended Declaration of Connie Chaffins	Estimated compliance costs for meeting proposed R.22-03-016 customer service metrics and descriptions of Verizon's customer care procedures	Connie Chaffins, Senior Director of Operations	Sections of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s)
Exhibit 1: Prior May 12, 2025 Declarations of Connie Chaffins and Joel Rioux supporting comments on R.22-03-016 Proposed Decision	**Chaffins:** Cost estimates of meeting proposed customer service standards in R.22-03-016, including detailed description of customer care operations and procedures **Rioux:** Cost estimates of meeting network outage reporting standards in R.22-03-016, including detailed description of network and outage repair, steps needed to attempt compliance, and feasibility issues.	Connie Chaffins, Joel Rioux	Declarations describe existing Verizon operational processes, operational changes required to meet proposed standards, infeasibility analyses to meet such standards, and the cost estimates to do so.
Exhibit 2: Prior July 8, 2025 Declaration of Connie Chaffins in support of Motion of CTIA, AT&T, T-Mobile, and Verizon to Reopen and Supplement the Record	Cost estimate of meeting proposed customer service standard, specifically the 80%/60 second compliance threshold for call answer metric, including description of Verizon's IVR processes designed to meet specific customer needs to match them with the right agent	Connie Chaffins	Declaration describes existing Verizon operational processes with respect to call answer metrics, operational changes required to meet proposed standards, infeasibility analyses to meet such standards, and the cost estimates to do so
Exhibit 3: Actual Costs of Sample of Macro-Cell Site Builds	Cost estimate of sampling of macro-cell site builds	Joel Rioux	Detailed workpaper showing Verizon actual cost of building a sample of macro-cell cites

			(including costs for real estate, construction, and transport) in urban, suburban, and rural construction terrain across California
Exhibit 4: Estimated Annual Costs to Implement 90%/60 Call Answer Time Metric in California	Cost estimate to adapt current operational processes to meet 90%/60 call answer time customer service metric in California	Connie Chaffins	Detailed workpaper showing assumptions and conditions affecting estimated costs to meet 90%/60 call answer time customer service metric in California as part of customer service operational processes
Exhibit 5: Estimated Annual Costs to Implement 10 Second "Speak" Chatbot Requirement	Cost estimate to adapt current operational processes to meet requirement to implement 10 second "speak" chatbot requirement	Connie Chaffins	Detailed workpaper showing assumptions and conditions affecting estimated costs to implement 10 second "speak" chatbot requirement as part of customer service operational processes
Exhibit 6: Estimated Annual Costs to Implement 80%/60 Call Answer Time Metric in California	Cost estimate to adapt current operational processes to meet 80%/60 call answer time customer service metric in California	Connie Chaffins	Detailed workpaper showing assumptions and conditions affecting estimated costs to meet 80%/60 call answer time customer service metric in California as part of customer service operational processes
Exhibit 7: Estimated Annual Personnel Costs for Scheduled Callback in California	Cost estimate to adapt current operational processes to meet proposed scheduled callback customer service requirement in California	Connie Chaffins	Detailed workpaper showing assumptions and conditions affecting estimated costs to meet proposed scheduled callback customer service requirement
Exhibit 8: Verizon 2020-2025 California Office of Emergency Service Community Isolation Outage Report Data	CalOES Outage Report Data	Joel Rioux	List of reports from 2020-2025 triggered by outages meeting CalOES thresholds and affected communities

June 2026 Workshop Slides			
Section/Attachment/Exhibit	Topic(s)	Witness	Description
Session 1 Slides	Customer Service Metrics	Connie Chaffins and Barry Carlsen, Associate Director Workforce Planning and Analysis	New customer service initiative, customer service priorities, key customer performance standards, and cost of implementation
Session 2 Slides	CalOES Reports	Andis Kalnins, Associate Director – Business Continuity and Event Management	Wireless providers compete on network performance, Verizon network uptime is high, factors outside of Verizon's control, and Verizon's credit policy
Session 3 Slides	Outage Metrics – Industry KPIs	Rommel Angeles, Associate Vice President – Network	Improving wireless voice service quality and related statistics, Verizon's key performance indicators for voice services, Verizon's high quality wireless voice services,
July 27, 2026 Response to ALJ Ruling			
Section/Attachment/Exhibit	Topic(s)	Declarant(s)	Description
Factual information in Responses to Section 2, Subparts A, D, and F; and Section 3, Question 3(a)-(c) supported by Verification and Declaration of Connie Chaffins	Cost estimates to meet customer service standard metrics including detailed description of customer care operations and procedures	Connie Chaffins, Senior Director of Operations	Sections of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s) and related exhibits
Factual information in Responses to Section 2, Subpart B; and Section 3, Question 3(d) supported by Verification and Declaration of Tanya L. Generoso	General ledger details to support cost estimate for current agent answer time standard	Tanya L. Generoso, Senior Director for Verizon's Field Finance CCS and CXO consumer group team	Sections of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s) and related exhibits
Factual information in Responses to Section 3, Questions 1 and 2(a)-(b) supported by Verification and Declaration of Joel Rioux	CalOES outage reporting, current time to complete outage repairs, number of outage repair tickets and number of tickets currently meeting standard time, and costs of restoring outage tickets	Joel Rioux	Section of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s) and related exhibits

Factual information in Response to Section 3 of the Ruling, Questions 2(c) supported by Verification and Declaration of Bryan Weiss	California operating expenditures for Verizon's network maintenance and operations, reflecting the costs for the network's striving to meet internal targets	Bryan Weiss	Section of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s) and related exhibits
Exhibit 1	Number of tickets to track to ensure 90 day resolution and customer service standard implementation costs	Connie Chaffins	Detailed workpaper describing implementation costs to meet proposed 90 day resolution standard
Exhibit 2	2023-2025 customer service costs	Tanya L. Generoso	Detailed workpaper describing customer service costs from 2023-2025
Exhibit 3	Customer service call costs per call calculations	Connie Chaffins	Detailed workpaper describing number of customer service calls, total wireless customer service expenditures, and cost per call
Exhibit 4	Estimated costs to meet 80%/ 60 proposed standard	Connie Chaffins	Detailed workpaper describing implementation costs to meet proposed 80%/60 answer time metric
Exhibit 5	Estimated costs to meet two-hour repair standard	Joel Rioux	Detailed workpaper describing implementation costs to meet proposed two-hour repair standard for service restoral
Exhibit 6	Monthly cell site alert count from 2024 to 2026	Joel Rioux	Detailed workpaper showing number of cell site alerts on a monthly basis from 2024 to 2026
Exhibit 7	General ledger details relating to network maintenance and operations	Bryan Weiss	Detailed workpaper describing actual costs related to network maintenance and operations in Verizon's Northern and Southern California operations

Exhibit 8	Calls from California customer and number of calls answered in 60 seconds or less from 2023-2025	Connie Chaffins	Detailed workpaper describing number of customer service calls and percentage of such calls answered in 60 seconds or less.
September 8, 2026 Comments on ALJ Ruling and Staff Proposal			
Section/Attachment/Exhibit	Topic(s)	Declarant(s)	Description
Factual information in Responses to Sections II and VI supported by Verification and Declaration of Connie Chaffins	Cost and feasibility impacts of implementing customer service standards, including descriptions of Verizon's IVR procedures and callback options	Connie Chaffins	Sections of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s) and related exhibits
Factual information in Response to Sections IV and VI supported by Verification and Declaration of Christopher Taliaferro	Cost and feasibility impacts of implementing and maintaining signal propagation map	Christopher Taliaferro, Senior Director – Centralized Engineering	Sections of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s) and related exhibits
Factual information in Response to Sections III and VI supported by Verification and Declaration of Joel Rioux	Cost and feasibility impacts of complying with outage and network availability by PUMA rules	Joel Rioux	Sections of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s) and related exhibits
Factual information in Response to Section VI supported by Declaration of Paul Vasington	Quantifying total cost and customer impacts of complying with all Staff Proposal suggestions, including a potential regulatory surcharge	Paul Vasington	Section of Response and Declaration supporting aforementioned topic(s) and related exhibits
Exhibit 1	Vandalism and theft incident counts and related damages from 2020-2025	Joel Rioux	Detailed workpaper describing network-related vandalism and theft incident counts from 2020-2025 and associate damages arising from incidents
Exhibit 2	Estimated regulatory fee if costs were recovered through surcharges	Paul Vasington	Detailed workpaper describing through assumptions and conditions the cost to recover all implementation costs adopted

			from proposals via regulatory surcharge
Exhibit 3	Estimated costs to comply with 24 hour CalOES outage metric in Staff Proposal	Joel Rioux	Detailed workpaper describing through assumptions and conditions costs to comply with 24 hour CalOES outage metric throughout Verizon's Northern and Southern California Operations
Exhibit 4	Live agent at first prompt cost proposal	Connie Chaffins	Detailed workpaper describing through assumptions and conditions costs to implement live agent at first prompt proposal
Exhibit 5	Estimated recurring and nonrecurring costs to produce signal propagation map	Christopher Taliaferro	Detailed workpaper describing through assumptions and conditions recurring and nonrecurring costs to produce and maintain signal propagation map
Exhibit 6	Corrected June 2026 Workshop Slides	Connie Chaffins, Barry Carlsen, Andis Kalnis, Rommel Angeles	Corrected slides from June 2026 workshop to correct prior misstatements

Exhibit B

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Order Instituting Rulemaking Proceeding to Consider Service Quality Rules for Wireless Carriers.	FILED PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION February 26, 2026 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA Rulemaking 26-02-017

RESPONSES OF SMALL BUSINESS UTILITY ADVOCATES TO CTIA'S FIRST SET OF DATA REQUESTS

Pursuant to Rule 10.1 of the California Public Utilities Commission's ("Commission") Rules of Practice and Procedure, the Small Business Utility Advocates ("SBUA") hereby responds to CTIA – The Wireless Association's ("CTIA") First Set of Data Requests to SBUA, served August 27, 2026 ("Data Requests"). Each Data Request is restated in full below, followed by SBUA's response.

<u>PRELIMINARY STATEMENT</u>

Data Requests No. 2 and No. 5 seek support for specific phrases that the Staff Proposal attributes to SBUA, rather than language drawn from an SBUA filing. Where the language the Staff Proposal attributes to SBUA differs from SBUA's own statements in the cited record, SBUA identifies that difference below and responds based on what SBUA actually said.

<u>CTIA-SBUA DATA REQUEST NO. 1:</u>

Provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis supporting your claim in SBUA's Comments on the OIR that "the evidence consistently shows that providers do not treat all communities equally—with Environmental and Social Justice (ESJ) communities persistently underserved and deprioritized across every measurable dimension: investments, service quality, infrastructure upgrades, and competition." Comments of the Small Business Utility Advocates on Order Instituting Rulemaking, R.26-02-017 (March 26, 2026) at 2.

RESPONSE TO DATA REQUEST NO. 1:

The cited statement is supported by the specific facts, documents, data, and analysis identified in SBUA's Comments on the OIR at 2, addressing each dimension named in the cited statement:

- On investments: the Network Exam Reports, Phase I and Phase II, documented AT&T's and Frontier's pattern of investing in higher-income, predominantly white communities while underinvesting in lower-income communities and communities of color.
- On service quality: the Network Exam Report, Phase II, found that wire centers serving lower-income areas experience higher trouble report rates and longer out-of-service durations than those serving higher-income areas.
- On infrastructure upgrades: Hernán Galperin, et al., University of Southern California Annenberg School, found that broadband infrastructure upgrades are skewed against less affluent areas and communities of color — particularly in

low-income, predominantly Black neighborhoods in Los Angeles County, where ISPs appear to "cherry-pick" wealthier areas for faster deployment.

- On competition: the same Galperin study found that in traditionally Black neighborhoods of Los Angeles County, the odds of competition between two or more ISPs are below 62 percent, compared to above 73 percent in areas with smaller Black populations.

These are all of the facts, documents, data, and analysis SBUA relied upon in support of the cited statement.

CTIA-SBUA DATA REQUEST NO. 2:

The Staff Proposal states that SBUA explained that "underserved communities are relying heavily on wireless services to run their businesses." Staff Proposal at 13. Provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis supporting that statement, including the basis for concluding that such communities rely "heavily" on wireless services to run their businesses.

RESPONSE TO DATA REQUEST NO. 2:

The cited language is the Staff Proposal's characterization of oral testimony given by SBUA's counsel at the June 25, 2026 workshop in this proceeding. SBUA's counsel stated: "California's small businesses, including those in ESJ and underserved communities, all of which are increasingly relying on wireless to run their businesses." (June 25, 2026 Workshop, Recording at 00:08:21 (SBUA, I. Hayward).) SBUA's own statement used the word "increasingly," not "heavily"; the word "heavily" appears in the Staff Proposal's paraphrase of that testimony, not in SBUA's own words.

Independent data corroborates SBUA's use of "increasingly," at three levels. First, at the level of individual reliance on wireless generally: as of July–December 2024, 78.7% of U.S. adults lived in households without a landline telephone, a statistically significant 2.7-percentage-point increase from the same period in 2023, continuing a trend documented since 2003. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, Wireless Substitution: Early Release of Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, July–December 2024 (June 2025), available at https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless202506.pdf.)

Second, and more specifically to small business operations: a March 2025 survey of 600 small and mid-sized business decision-makers found that, among respondents in the retail, restaurant and bar, and food and beverage industries, the share reporting that their business uses 5G networks to support contactless payments at retail locations rose continuously from 24% (August 2023) to 34% (August 2024) to 40% (March 2025); the share using 5G networks to power sensors or track inventory rose from 17% (August 2023) to 31% (August 2024), holding roughly steady at 30% (March 2025). (Verizon Business, 6th Annual State of Small Business Survey, Year Six Results (April 2025), at 9, available at https://www.verizon.com/about/sites/default/files/Verizon_State_of_SMB_April_2025.pdf (survey conducted by Morning Consult, March 7–22, 2025; n=600; margin of error ±4 percentage points).)

Third, small businesses' increasing reliance on wireless technology extends beyond mobile phone service to wireless connectivity generally: Fitch Ratings reported in March 2025 that fixed wireless access — priced at $30 to $60 per month, compared to $60 to

$80 for traditional wired internet service — is “an attractive option” for, among others, “small businesses with lower bandwidth needs,” with nationwide subscribership reaching nearly 12 million by year-end 2024. (Fitch Ratings, Fixed Wireless Access Growth Disrupts U.S. Telecom Market (Mar. 26, 2025), available at https://www.fitchratings.com/research/corporate-finance/fixed-wireless-access-growth-disrupts-us-telecom-market-26-03-2025.)

Fourth, the record in this proceeding includes direct testimony from Nicole Redler, a small business owner, who testified that "[r]eliable wireless service is an essential for our day-to-day work," describing her business's use of wireless service to host peer-to-peer video support groups for veterans living with PTSD. (Public Participation Hearing Transcript, R.26-02-017, Volume 2, July 23, 2026, Statement of Speaker Redler, at 206.)

Fifth, the docket's public comment record includes a similar account from another small business owner: Edwin Dimas, a small business owner in San Clemente, wrote that reliable wireless service "is not a luxury for me—it is an essential tool for running my business." (Public Comment of Edwin Dimas, R.26-02-017, filed July 10, 2026.)

The five sources identified above provide additional facts, documents, data, and analysis corroborating the statement quoted above.

CTIA-SBUA DATA REQUEST NO. 3:

The Staff Proposal states that SBUA urged the Commission “to extend the customer service quality standards in General Order 133-E to wireless carriers with updates to ensure the standards protect all ratepayers, including small businesses.” Staff Proposal *at 13. Identify each General Order 133-E standard and each "update" that SBUA contends should apply to wireless carriers to protect small businesses, and provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis supporting the need for such proposal.*

RESPONSE TO DATA REQUEST NO. 3:

SBUA's OIR Comments state that SBUA supports extending to wireless carriers "the full suite of service quality standards in General Order 133-E, including the enforcement mechanisms and penalty structures that give those standards meaning." (Comments of the Small Business Utility Advocates on Order Instituting Rulemaking, March 26, 2026, at 4.) SBUA identifies the following updates it currently recommends, with the facts, documents, data, and analysis supporting each cited in the corresponding subsection of SBUA's Comments on the Administrative Law Judge's Ruling Issuing Staff Proposal, filed September 8, 2026 ("September 8 Comments"), which is produced herewith and incorporated by reference:

- Pairing each of the Staff Proposal's fine structures with an automatic customer credit, rather than a general fund fine alone, so that ratepayers harmed by a violation are directly compensated (September 8 Comments §II.A);
- Adding ESJ community designation and, where available, small business account information to the Cal OES Community Isolation Outage Standard's reporting requirements, and adding a mechanism for a business to self-report the impact of an outage (September 8 Comments §II.B). SBUA notes that General Order 133-E already includes a Wireless Community Isolation Outage Repair Standard requiring restoration of community isolation outages within 24 hours; to the extent the Staff Proposal's Cal OES Community Isolation Outage Standard

updates or supersedes that existing General Order 133-E standard, SBUA's recommendation is responsive to this Data Request on that basis as well;

- Shortening the Customer Service Standard's billing dispute resolution window from 90 to 30 days, and affirmatively supporting the Staff Proposal's Clarifications #1 and #2 to the answer-time criterion (September 8 Comments §II.D.1);
- Disaggregating Customer Service Standard reporting by ESJ community designation and small business account type, rather than reporting compliance at the company level only (September 8 Comments §II.D.2); and
- Adding a problem-resolution metric to complement the existing answer-time criterion (September 8 Comments §II.D.3).

SBUA's September 8 Comments also address the Staff Proposal's Network Availability by PUMA Standard (§II.C) and Signal Propagation Map requirement (§II.E). Those two standards do not correspond to any standard currently in General Order 133-E, and SBUA understands this Data Request, directed to General Order 133-E, not to reach them on that basis. SBUA is prepared to identify the facts, documents, data, and analysis supporting those recommendations as well, to the extent CTIA intends this or a future Data Request to reach them.

CTIA-SBUA DATA REQUEST NO. 4:

The Staff Proposal states that SBUA "pointed out that the record already shows that the environmental and social justice (ESJ) communities have been underserved and they experience higher trouble report rates and slower infrastructure upgrades." Staff Proposal at 14. Provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis supporting the *statement regarding what the record already shows with respect to ESJ communities and wireless service, including the communities, carriers, trouble-report rates, comparison groups, infrastructure upgrades, and time periods on which SBUA relies.*

RESPONSE TO DATA REQUEST NO. 4:

SBUA relies on the same sources identified in its response to Data Request No. 1: the Network Exam Phase I and Phase II Reports. Those Reports address the wireline networks of AT&T California and Frontier California, and the trouble-report rate and infrastructure findings SBUA has cited concern those two carriers' wireline networks over the period examined in the Network Exam (approximately 2010–2017). SBUA is not in possession of wireless-specific trouble-report data broken out by community, carrier, comparison group, or time period. SBUA's position is that the pattern identified in the wireline record warrants examination in the wireless context as well; this is the basis for SBUA's recommendation in its September 8 Comments that Cal OES and Customer Service Standard reporting be disaggregated by ESJ community designation, which would allow the Commission to develop the wireless-specific data that does not yet exist.

<u>CTIA-SBUA DATA REQUEST NO. 5:</u>

The Staff Proposal states that "SBUA stressed the need for disaggregated, timely service quality data to reveal disparities affecting emergency communication." Staff Proposal at 37. Identify all "disparities affecting emergency communications" YOU contend exists with respect to wireless service and provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis that support YOUR contention.

RESPONSE TO DATA REQUEST NO. 5:

The cited language is the Staff Proposal's characterization of SBUA's oral testimony at the June 25, 2026 workshop, cited by the Staff Proposal at footnote 141 (Recording at 00:08:03). That testimony addressed the need for disaggregated, timely reporting to reveal service-quality and reporting disparities affecting ESJ communities generally. It did not use the phrase "emergency communication."

SBUA's position, reflected in Section II.B of its September 8, 2026 Comments, is that the Cal OES Community Isolation Outage Standard's reporting fields do not currently capture commercial character or ESJ community designation, and that the Commission cannot determine whether such a disparity exists without that information. SBUA's recommendation is that the reporting fields be expanded to make that determination possible; SBUA is not aware of facts, documents, data, or analysis establishing that the disparity itself currently exists.

<u>VERIFICATION</u>

I am Regulatory Attorney for the Small Business Utility Advocates ("SBUA") and am authorized to make this verification on SBUA's behalf. I have read the foregoing responses to CTIA’s First Set of Data Requests and know the contents thereof. The responses are true of my own knowledge, except as to matters stated on information and belief, and as to those matters, I believe them to be true. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated: September 8, 2026

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Itzel Berrio Hayward

Itzel Berrio Hayward
Regulatory Attorney
E&E Law Corp.
One Sansome Street, Suite 1400
San Francisco, CA 94104

Counsel for: Small Business Utility Advocates

Exhibit C

Response of The Utility Reform Network to *CTIA Data Request 001*

Rulemaking 26-02-017

Request Date September 4, 2026

Response September 9, 2026

Response of The Utility Reform Network to *CTIA Data Request 001*

The Utility Reform Network hereby submit this response ("Response") to the data request ("Data Request") submitted by CTIA on September 1, 2026, as part of the R.26-02-017 proceeding. This Response is being submitted on September 9, 2026.

GENERAL OBJECTIONS

1. TURN objects to each instruction submitted with the Data Request to the extent any or all of them exceed the requirements of applicable law and/or purport to impose on TURN any obligations greater than those set forth in the Commission Rules of Practice and Procedure, Commission orders and decisions, and/or any other statutes, orders, rules, or laws governing the proper scope and extent of discovery in this proceeding.
2. TURN objects to the Data Request to the extent that it seeks the production of information and/or documents not in TURN's possession, custody, or control, or in the requested format, not readily available to TURN, or produced and kept by TURN in its ordinary course of business.
3. TURN Objects to the Data Request to the extent that it seeks the production of information and/or documents that were not prepared by TURN.
4. TURN objects to this Data Request to the extent it calls for information and/or documents that are privileged.
5. TURN objects to the Data Request to the extent that it is vague, ambiguous, cumulative, duplicative, overly broad and unduly burdensome, imprecise, or utilize terms that are subject to multiple interpretations and are not properly defined or explained for the purposes of the information requested.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

1. Any Information or materials provided in response to this Data request shall not infringe TURN's right to object to the admissibility of the contained information or materials as evidence, or TURN's right to object to further discovery of documents, other information, or materials relating to the same or similar subject matter upon any valid ground, nor be deemed a waiver of objections or applicable privileges. TURN reserves the right to interpose further objections at the time of producing data or documents or to withdraw any objective interposed herein.
2. The fact that any response is given to the Data Requests is not an admission or concession that the substance of the Data Request is permissible discovery or inquiry.
3. TURN's investigation and discovery of the information relating to the Data Request are ongoing. This response and the objections contained therein are based on information and or documents presently know to, and in the possession of, TURN. TURN reserves the right to rely on any documents or other evidence that may develop or subsequently come to its attention, to assert additional objections should TURN discover that there are

information or grounds for objections, and to supplement or amend this response at any time.

4. Nothing contained in these responses is intended to be or should be considered a waiver of the attorney-client privilege, attorney work-product doctrine, common interest doctrine, or other applicable privilege, immunity, the right of privacy, or other exemption from discovery. TURN specifically reserves the right to assert privileges for any privileged or otherwise protected information that is disclosed inadvertently in response to this Data Request.

RESPONSES

1. Data Request No. 1

Provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis that support your claim that customers are "subjected to a never-ending loop of customer service reps who turn out to be AI." See TURN Workshop Slides, Workshop Session #1—Customer Service Metrics, Slide 2. (Administrative Law Judge's Ruling Issuing Staff Proposal, at Attachment 4, p. 27)

<u>Response to Data Request No. 1</u>

TURN incorporates by reference its Objections and Reservations stated above, including General Objections 1, 3, 4, and 5 and Reservation of Rights 1-2. Subject to these stipulations and without waiver of its objections or reservations of rights, TURN offers the following:

Data Request No. 1 appears to mischaracterize the slightly mis-cited TURN slide. The Administrative Law Judge's Ruling Issuing Staff Proposal, at Attachment 4, p. 27 depicts one slide from TURN's Workshop Session #1 Customer Service Metrics presentation by Ms. Regina Costa that includes the following "As TURN and CforAT have argued, customers <u>should not</u> be subjected to a never-ending loop of customer service reps who turn out to be AI." [emphasis added] As such, TURN has no further response.

2. Data Request No. 2

At Workshop #1, Ms. Costa purported to read comments from a Public Participation Hearing. Provide the proceeding number and a complete copy of the transcript, with page and line references, for each comment she recited or summarized.

TURN incorporates by reference its Objections and Reservations stated above, including General Objections 2, 3, and 5 and Reservation of Rights 1-3. Subject to these stipulations and without waiver of its objections or reservations of rights, TURN offers the following:

Ms. Costa cited the following Public Participation Hearing comments:

- Comment of Brad Thomas from the April 23, 2023, PPH in R.22-03-016, at 418:2-17.
- Comment of Greg Hamilton at from the same PPH at 317:4-22.

The official transcript for this PPH is publicly available online at https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Efile/G000/M511/K719/511719069.PDF.

3. Data Request No. 3

At Workshop #1, TURN referenced a customer located in Castro Valley who "described the poor cellular service provided by AT&T to approximately 500 out of 5,000 households in his area." Provide all facts, reports, documents, data, and analysis that reflect or otherwise reference any steps taken by TURN to confirm or otherwise investigate that customer's statement.

TURN incorporates by reference its Objections and Reservations stated above, including General Objections 1, and 3-5 and Reservation of Rights 1-2. Subject to these stipulations and without waiver of its objections or reservations of rights, TURN offers the following:

The comment Ms. Costa read can be found the transcript for the April 18, 2023, PPH in R.22-03-016 (Tr. Vol. 3) at 317:7-14, the official version of which is available online at https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Efile/G000/M511/K719/511719069.PDF. No additional research efforts were made, nor did TURN attempt to contact the commenter.

4. Data Request No. 4

The Staff Proposal states that TURN "noted that the current Cal OES community isolation outage notification requirements may not capture all outages, particularly in areas with smaller populations where the community could have terrible service without meeting the reporting threshold." Staff Proposal at 14, citing Workshop #1, Recording at 00:33:00. Identify every outage, area, population threshold, and instance of alleged "terrible service" on which TURN relies, and provide all facts, documents, data, and analyses supporting the statement.

TURN incorporates by reference its Objections and Reservations stated above, including General Objections 1-3 and 5, and Reservation of Rights 1-2. Subject to these stipulations and without waiver of its objections or reservations of rights, TURN offers the following:

This statement is a logical conclusion derived from information presented at the PPHs and the definition of a Community Isolation Outage. Using Mr. Hamilton from Castro Valley as an example (discussed in Question 3, above), Ms. Costa reasoned that because the standard for a reportable outage is one that covers at least 25% of a zip code,[1] if a disaster affects a cellular site that serves less than 25% of customers in a zip code and due to factors such as topography, those customers cannot connect to another cell site, they will experience an outage that does not meet the Community Isolation Outage reporting threshold.

Similarly, logic dictates that in areas where there is unreliable or spotty cell service, cell sites may be functioning, but lack of reliable service creates a public safety concern that is not due to a network outage and is therefore not a reportable Community Isolation Outage.

To develop these comments, TURN reviewed the applicable statutes and requirements for community isolation outage reporting as well as the April 11, 2025, proposed decision and public comments in R.22-03-016.

[1] Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 19, § 2480.2(a)(3) (2026).

5. Data Request No. 5

The Staff Proposal describes an example attributed to Ms. Costa in which she "spent most of a 15-minute call on hold," was "disconnected after being given an inaccurate response," and then "had to wait 136 minutes for a scheduled callback," and further states that "patients and other customers have reported being placed on hold for up to 45 minutes or experiencing dropped calls after waiting 30 minutes." Staff Proposal at 44. For each incident, identify the date, carrier, customer, issue presented, response received, basis for characterizing any response as inaccurate, hold or callback duration, ultimate resolution, and all supporting facts, documents, records, data, and analysis.

TURN incorporates by reference its Objections and Reservations stated above, including General Objections 1, 2, 4 and 5 and Reservation of Rights 1-3. Subject to these stipulations and without waiver of its objections or reservations of rights, TURN offers the following:

The Staff Proposal incorrectly attributes the above-mentioned quote to Ms. Costa. The quote is attributable to an AT&T Customer who posted a comment on Trustpilot.[2]

Ms. Costa's additional comments about hold times and dropped calls come from review of public comments made at the PPHs held in R.22-03-016, such as the comment of Brad Thomas, which is cited in TURN's response to Question 2 of this Data Request. TURN did not take additional measures to verify individual comments.

[2] *See* Opening Comments of TURN on the August 2026 Staff Proposal (filed Sept. 8, 2026) at 13.

Exhibit D

R.26-02-017 (WIRELESS SERVICE QUALITY)

CforAT Response to CTIA First Set of Data Requests (issued August 27, 2026)

September 14, 2026

GENERAL RESPONSE:

As a threshold issue, CforAT notes that the Data Requests propounded by CTIA generally treat information discussed at the first workshop in isolation, and do not acknowledge the existence of a robust record in both this, and prior, service quality proceedings. CforAT has repeatedly addressed the policy issues raised in the Data Requests propounded by CTIA in filings submitted in multiple Commission proceedings, including (but not limited to):

- Order Instituting Investigation to Evaluate Telecommunications Corporations Service Quality Performance and Consider Modifications to Service Quality Rules, R.11-12-001 (Dec. 1, 2011);
- Order Instituting Rulemaking Proceeding to Consider Amendments to General Order 133, R.22-03-016 (Mar. 17, 2022); and
- Order Instituting Rulemaking Proceeding to Consider Service Quality Rules for Wireless Carriers, R.26-02-017 (Sept. 8, 2026).

CforAT broadly refers to our filings in these proceedings to inform our positions on the various issues addressed in these data requests.

CTIA-CforAT DATA REQUEST NO. 1:

Provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis supporting your claim that "50 percent of customers receive service quality that is below average." CforAT Workshop Slides, Session #1: Customer Service Metrics at Slide 2. (Administrative Law Judge's Ruling Issuing Staff Proposal, at Attachment 4, p. 21).

CforAT Response to DR No. 1:

CforAT's claim that 50% of customers receive service that is below average is a fact of general knowledge not reasonably in dispute and is based on the mathematical certainty that when determining any average of any group, fifty percent of members of that group will fall below the average, and fifty percent of that group will fall above the average. You may find the following texts useful:

- California CAASPP Grade 6 Math Made Ridiculously Simple;
- 6th Grade California Math for Beginners;
- Go Math California Grade 6 Student Edition; or
- Prentice Hall Mathematics California Grade 6 Math.

CTIA-CforAT DATA REQUEST NO. 2:

Provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis supporting your claim that "the 80% of customer calls w/in 60 seconds metric is unacceptable" and providers should report percentages of calls answered within timeframes beyond 60 seconds and "by zip code, where a customer has made more than one customer service call within two weeks, one month, or three months." CforAT Workshop Slides, Session #1: Customer Service Metrics at Slide 4. (Administrative Law Judge's Ruling Issuing Staff Proposal, at Attachment 4, p. 23)

CforAT Response to DR No. 2:

The claim that the current call response time is unacceptable is CforAT's long-held policy position based not only on our years of work in this policy area, but also on our decades of work with the members of the disability communities and low-income communities that we serve. Additionally, please see General Response above.

CTIA-CforAT DATA REQUEST NO. 3:

Provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis supporting your claim that the wireless providers' "KPIs are company-focused." CforAT Workshop Slides, Session #3: Outage Metrics—Industry KPIs at Slide 3. (Administrative Law Judge's Ruling Issuing Staff Proposal, at Attachment 4, p. 135) Define the term "company-focused" as used by CfAT [sic] for these purposes.

CforAT Response to DR No. 3:

- CforAT understands "Key Performance Indicators" (KPIs) to be metrics that companies use to measure their company's performance with the ultimate goal of maximizing profits.
- "Company-focused" refers to the fact that companies use KPIs to ensure that their policies and processes are achieving company objectives, i.e., maximizing profits.
- CforAT's claim that KPIs are necessarily company-focused is a policy position reflecting our longstanding arguments that Commission action is needed to support service quality standards that are customer-focused and effective.

CTIA-CforAT DATA REQUEST NO. 4:

Provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis supporting your claim that "[n]one of these KPIs tell us anything about service quality," including, without limitation, identification of the KPIs to which you referred. CforAT Workshop Slides, Session #3: Outage Metrics—Industry KPIs at Slide 3. (Administrative Law Judge's Ruling Issuing Staff Proposal, at Attachment 4, p. 135)

CforAT Response to DR No. 4:

- See response to Data Request No. 3, above.
- As noted in our response to Data Request No. 3, carrier KPIs are company-focused. It is CforAT's policy position that KPIs, which are meant to help companies maximize profits, are not an effective tool for evaluating service quality. This is consistent with our longstanding arguments that Commission action is needed to support service quality standards that are customer-focused and effective.

CTIA-CforAT DATA REQUEST NO. 5:

For each KPI metric proposed by CforAT, identify the alleged wireless service quality problem the metric is intended to address and provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis supporting CforAT's claim that a service quality problem warrants the proposed metric. *See* CforAT Workshop Slides, Session #3: Outage Metrics—Industry KPIs at Slides 4-5. (Administrative Law Judge's Ruling Issuing Staff Proposal, at Attachment 4, p. 136-137).

CforAT Response to DR No. 5:

CforAT's proposed KPI metrics are policy positions meant to address current flaws or gaps in the information providers collect and report. These policy positions are based on our years of work in this policy area, and on feedback from members of the disability communities and low-income communities that we serve.

- The "call volume per cell site" KPI will collect data regarding network use and possible network congestion during Community Isolation Outages.
- The "mean time to repair" KPI will collect data on how long providers spend on repairs allowing for meaningful evaluation of provider response time and repair times.
- The "equitable distribution of new or updated technology" will collect information about the age of infrastructure disaggregated by census block, which can be used to determine whether outages occur more frequently in areas with older technologies or slower network upgrades.

CTIA-CforAT DATA REQUEST NO. 6:

Provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis supporting your claim at Workshop #1 that you believe there are "instances recently where providers have taken months to address service quality issues while continuing to bill customers," including, without limitation, the date each alleged service quality issue was reported to the provider and the resolution date, the customer name, the provider name, and a description of the alleged service quality issue.

CforAT Response to DR No. 6:

This is a fact of general knowledge not reasonably in dispute and was specifically acknowledged by CTIA in a recent filing.[1]

This claim is based on our years of work in this policy area, and on feedback from members of the disability communities and low-income communities that we serve. See also CforAT's filings in the various proceedings noted in our General Response above as well as statements by customers made at PPHs in this and predecessor proceedings.

[1] Comments of CTIA on Staff Proposal, Appendix A (filed Sept. 8, 2026) (Comments of Josh Coulter, Daniel Diaz, Mary Shafer-Moya, Jeremy Howard, and Ian Goodfellow).

CTIA-CforAT DATA REQUEST NO. 7:

> Provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis supporting your claim at Workshop #1 that customers receive "tiered service" depending on the plan to which they subscribe and that wait times are longer for customers that providers "don't see as important."

CforAT Response to DR No. 7:

This question misstates CforAT's presentation at Workshop #1. Accordingly, CforAT is unable to respond to this question.

CTIA-CforAT DATA REQUEST NO. 8:

At Workshop #1, you claimed that you "talked with some engineers" regarding calls that drop between towers. Provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis that support your claim relating to dropped calls, including, without limitation, the date of each alleged call drop, the name, job title, and contact information of each engineer you spoke with, the provider name, and a description of each alleged call-drop incident.

CforAT Response to DR No. 8:

- CforAT objects to this data request to the extent that it asks for the identity, reports, and communications of one or more non-testifying experts, and that those identities, reports, and communications are protected by the attorney-client privilege and the work product doctrine
- Without withdrawing the objection, CforAT cannot answer this request because the term "your claim relating to dropped calls" is vague, and without further detail (such as a citation to a specific part of the Staff Report or a specific reference to CforAT's presentation at the workshop), CforAT cannot determine what information CTIA is seeking.
- CforAT has had discussions with network engineers in many casual or group settings, on a wide variety of topics. CforAT has not retained the names or contact information of those engineers.

CTIA-CforAT DATA REQUEST NO. 9:

> The Staff Proposal attributes the following statement to CforAT: "[O]n a customer perspective… we want to make sure that people have access to good service, they have access to customer service, and they can have expectations on the kind of service that they are going to receive." Staff Proposal at 5. To the extent YOU contend that California wireless consumers lack such access, provide all facts, documents, data, and analysis that support YOUR contention.

CforAT Response to DR No. 9

This statement is CforAT's long-held policy position based not only on our years of work in this policy area, but also on our decades of work with the members of the disability communities and low-income communities that we serve. Additionally, please see "General Response" above.

<u>CTIA-CforAT DATA REQUEST NO. 10:</u>

> The Staff Proposal states that CforAT "emphasized the need for more granular wireless coverage data, explaining that high-level averages hide repeated outages for the same communities." Staff Proposal at 37. Identify the wireless coverage data YOU contend in not sufficiently granular and all "repeated outages" that YOU contend are hidden by such coverage data. Provide all facts, documents, data, and analyses that support YOUR contentions.

<u>CforAT Response to DR No. 10:</u>

This statement is CforAT's long-held policy position based not only on our years of work in this policy area, but also on our decades of work with the members of the disability communities and low-income communities that we serve. Additionally, CforAT has addressed these questions at length in prior filings in Commission proceedings. See "General Response," above. In particular, CforAT has repeatedly noted that statewide averages of network availability fail to provide information that allows analysis of service in any particular community.

Exhibit E

R.26-02-017 (Wireless Service Quality Rulemaking)

Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless

CforAT Response to Verizon Data Request 1 (issued August 31, 2026)

September 11, 2026

DATA REQUESTS

DATA REQUEST NO. 1.

Attachment B (Summary of the June 25, 2026 workshop) to the August 19, 2026 Ruling on Page 9 states:

> CforAT also advocated for a new fine mechanism. According to CforAT's calculations, the fines resulting from one day of failing to meet service quality metrics are miniscule compared to Verizon's daily revenue from California customers.

The following footnote after the above-referenced excerpt states: "The fine would be about $6,300 and Verizon's daily revenue from California customers is about $370,000." The excerpt from the transcript relating to the workshop summary states:

> Uh I did some back of the envelope math. Uh I used what we understand Verizon's number of California customers to be. And um if we applied a fine uh based on a single day of meeting one of failing to meet one of the service metrics, it um would come out to about $6,300 uh compared to Verizon's $370,000 in daily revenue from California customers. That's just not enough. . . .

Please identify the source data and provide all documents relied upon by CforAT for Verizon's "daily revenue from California customers," including all source data for the revenue and number of California customers.

Response:

1. Our rough understanding of Verizon's revenue is derived from Verizon's Annual SEC Report: Annual Report Pursuant to Section 13 Or 15(D) Of the Securities Exchange Act Of 1934 For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2023, Verizon Communications Inc.,

available at https://www.verizon.com/about/sites/default/files/2023-Annual-Report-on-Form-10k.pdf (last accessed Sept. 10, 2026).

2. Our rough understanding of Verizon's customer count is derived from Verizon's Annual SEC Report and the article Verizon: Working Together to Close California's Digital Divide (Feb. 8, 2023), *available at* https://advocacy.calchamber.com/2023/02/08/verizon-working-together-to-close-californias-digital-divide/ (last accessed Sept. 9, 2026).