

Telecom Alert: December 5, 2016 - WTB Activity During Transition; Walden Named Chair of House Energy and Commerce; Rivada Sues Over FirstNet Procurement; USAC Reveals Draft of Lifeline National Verifier Plan

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WTB Activity During Transition

Wireless Telecommunication Bureau Chief Jon Wilkins stated that the Bureau will continue its work on implementing the 3.5 GHz rules, the spectrum frontiers proceeding, ways to streamline tribal review of infrastructure siting, and incentive auction related matters. A number of other matters at the FCC have been put on hold as a result of the request by Congressional Committee and Sub-Committee Chairs that the FCC refrain from acting on controversial matters during the Presidential transition.

Greg Walden Named Chair of House Energy and Commerce Committee

Congressman Greg Walden of Oregon will replace Fred Upton as the Chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Walden is the current Chair of the Committee's Communications and Technology Subcommittee, and has served two successful terms as Chair of the NRCC, the Committee responsible for getting Republicans elected to the House.

Rivada Mercury Sues U.S. Government Over FirstNet Procurement

Rivada Mercury LLC filed a pre-award protest for "wrongful exclusion" from the FirstNet procurement process. The complaint alleges that the exclusion of Rivada from the procurement process is "arbitrary and capricious, an abuse of discretion, and not in accordance with procurement law and regulation," and asks the court to prevent the Department of Interior from awarding the contract without including Rivada in the competitive range. From all reports, AT&T is the only remaining

bidder. The protest will delay award of the contract, until at least March of 2017.

USAC Reveals Draft of Lifeline National Verifier Plan

Last week, the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) submitted its draft Lifeline National Verifier Plan to the FCC's Wireline Competition Bureau. The plan was required under the FCC's Lifeline Modernization Order to improve the process for determining eligibility of subscribers and combat waste, fraud, and abuse in the program. The Comment Period for the draft plan begins on December 5 and runs until December 30.

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