Resolution on Emergency Service Accessibility for Voice Over Internet Protocol Services

WHEREAS, The availability of emergency communications service (“E-911”) is a vital public service that has saved countless lives in emergency situations; and

WHEREAS, Consumers have come to expect that E911 service will be transparent regardless of the competitive carriers selected to provide local dial tone; and

WHEREAS, Ubiquitous E-911 service is an important element of homeland security at the local, State and national levels that improves the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies to prevent and respond to crime and terrorism; and

WHEREAS, Telecommunications competitive neutrality dictates that VoIP providers should provide the same level of E-911 services as all other local telecommunications providers; and

WHEREAS, According to the ITFacts.biz Web site, 10 percent of U.S. business lines are already using VoIP, generating $1.3 billion in 2004, while the VoIP industry projects growth in business and residential lines to generate revenues up to $20 billion by 2009; and

WHEREAS, On May 19, 2005, FCC Chairman Martin and Commissioners Abernathy, Adelstein and Copps took important steps to properly inform and protect VoIP customers by (i) requiring all VoIP providers to inform their customers of the emergency calling capabilities of their service by July 29, 2005, and (ii) protecting VoIP customers by establishing a deadline of no later than November 28, 2005 for being able to fully deliver E-911 calls along with the location of the caller to the appropriate public safety answering point; and

WHEREAS, Congress has recognized the national importance of E-911 service by introducing legislation that will protect the public and establish a seamless national E911 service; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), convened in its July 2005 Summer Committee Meeting in Austin, Texas, agrees with the warning of FCC Chairman Martin that this issue is a “matter of life and death” and commends Chairman Martin and Commissioners Abernathy, Adelstein and Copps for taking the leadership on addressing E-911 service over VoIP service and placing a firm deadline on the industry implementing a solution; and be it further

RESOLVED, NARUC commends Representatives Bart Gordon, TN, John Shimkus, IL and Anna Eshoo, CA, for introducing legislation to require all VoIP providers to provide effective E-911 service; and be it further

RESOLVED, NARUC is committed to working with Congress, the FCC and the industry on a comprehensive approach to the issue in order to educate and protect consumers regarding E-911 availability and services.

Sponsored by the Committee on Consumer Affairs
Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors July 27, 2005