

Resolution Honoring Rachelle B. Chong

WHEREAS, Former Commissioner-Squared Rachelle B. Chong started her career in the private practice of law after graduating from the University of California/Berkeley with a B.A. in Journalism and political science in 1981 and from the University of California/Hastings College of Law with a J.D. in 1984; *and*

WHEREAS, After making partner with the firm of Graham & James in rapid-fire order, she was appointed by former President William Jefferson Clinton to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in 1994, serving through 1997, witnessing the passage of Telecommunications Act of 1996 and thereby being able to lay claim (along with the late Secretary of State Dean Acheson) of being present "at the Creation;" *and*

WHEREAS, In addition to being known for many other distinctions during her service at the FCC, Commissioner Chong was notorious (or was it infamous?) as the agency's biggest Star Trek fan, being so committed to her enthusiasm that she required her staff to report for work attired as various Star Trek characters, much to their consternation (particularly in the case of the staffer who was required to dress as a "Tribble"); *and*

WHEREAS, Following another short stint in private practice and, in 2000-01, as General Counsel and Vice President of Government Affairs for Broadband Office, Rachelle determined to put her career where her enthusiasm was, operating an e-commerce enterprise and retail shop from 2001 through 2005, thereby demonstrating that there indeed could be life after the Dot Bomb crash; *and*

WHEREAS, In January 2006, Rachelle assumed the title Commissioner for the second time, when Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger appointed her to fill the unexpired term of former California Public Utilities Commissioner (CPUC) Susan Kennedy, who had left to become the Governor's Chief of Staff; *and*

WHEREAS, Commissioner Chong almost immediately assumed an activist role as a member of the NARUC Telecommunications Committee, where she became an articulate spokesperson for economic deregulation, competition and a light but enlightened regulatory touch on consumer issues, often (but not always) prevailing but always collegial, passionate and reasoned in equal parts, win or lose; *and*

WHEREAS, While she was a frequent champion of resolutions on mobile wireless topics, to the sometime delight and occasional chagrin of Dane Snowden and his colleagues at CTIA, Rachelle was most consistently and insistently focused on broadband and IP and other advanced services, where she was tireless both nationally and in California; *and*

WHEREAS, Commissioner Chong, in a vain attempt to be uncontroversial for once, sponsored an anti-texting resolution which was passed unanimously by the Telecommunications Committee only to be the subject of debate in front of, and ultimately rejected by the NARUC Board of Directors; *and*

WHEREAS, After a hiatus of over three years, Commissioner Chong was instrumental in securing the revitalization of the Federal-State Joint Conference on Advanced Telecommunications Services, otherwise known as the 706 Joint Conference, on which group she served and for which she organized a memorable "best practices" program in November, 2008; *and*

WHEREAS, Commissioner Chong will long be remembered by the State members of that group; by several FCC staff members; by Assistant Commerce Secretary, Communications and Information and National Telecommunications and Information Administration head Larry Strickling and NTIA staff; and by Rural Utilities Service Chief of Staff Lisa Zaina as well as a few other guests, meeting while waiting for the full complement of FCC Commissioners to be named and confirmed, when in the course of calling for accelerated action on broadband matters, she dropped a memorable rhetorical bomb on the assembled group; *and*

WHEREAS, During her tenure on the CPUC, Rachelle led the charge on building out broadband to "the least, the last and the lost" in spectacular fashion, funding 38 projects Statewide, covering over 11,000 square miles and benefiting an estimated 116,000 households through \$57.6 million in funding from the California Advanced Services Fund; *and*

WHEREAS, She continues to serve as Chair of the Expert Panel of the California Emerging Technology Fund, a non-profit organization championed by President Peevey and Commissioner Kennedy, which has been responsible for distributing another \$60 million to grantees who, among others, serve groups such as seniors, disadvantaged or low income at-risk youth, people with disabilities and rural dwellers; *and*

WHEREAS, Not content with playing in the broadband and communications space, Rachelle also impacted such initiatives as the California Solar Initiative, demand response, and Smart Grid, as well as championing a poly-lingual Commission which also has its own YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter pages; *and*

WHEREAS, Commissioner Chong is known as a cutting edge social networking practitioner on Facebook and Twitter, also utilizing her cell phone to keep up a steady barrage of texts, although she has been called to account for sending out text messages to colleagues lecturing them on the evils of texting while driving; *now, therefore be it*

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, convened at its 2010 Summer Committee Meetings in Sacramento, California, extends to Rachelle B. Chong of California its sincere thanks and appreciation for her dedicated and distinguished service to NARUC and the State of California; *and be it further*

RESOLVED, That her NARUC colleagues unanimously express the desire that in the words of Spock (Mr., not Dr.) our friend Rachelle will indeed "live long and prosper" wherever the future may take her.

*Sponsored by the Committee on Telecommunications
Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors July 21, 2010*