Resolution Supporting Continuing Improvements to CTIA’s Best Practices to Further Reduce Wireless Bill Shock

WHEREAS, The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) joins President Obama, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Genachowski and Consumers Union in its appreciation to the wireless industry to provide free alerts both before and after subscribers reach monthly limits on voice, data, text and international roaming charges when traveling abroad; and

WHEREAS, NARUC is pleased it brought attention to the need to harness technology to help empower consumers by notifying them of potential additional costs because of overages on services; and

WHEREAS, NARUC commends the Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association for taking the important consumer oriented step to include these changes in its Consumer Code for Wireless Services; and

WHEREAS, Continued technological changes could provide more detailed and up to date information allowing easier access to usage information for each service; and

WHEREAS, A generic notification that consumers are close to exceeding their limits on voice, data or text plan is helpful to consumers but still requires the consumer to proactively log on to their account or call the carrier to determine which service they are about to exceed before taking action to avoid overage charges; and

WHEREAS, It would be most useful and more efficient for wireless consumers to receive timely or immediate usage information for each service prior to incurring any overage charges; and

WHEREAS, Consumers would benefit if usage and/or plan balances for each service were available timely; and

WHEREAS, Consumer demand for wireless services – voice, text and data – is expected to continue to grow, potentially increasing overages; and

WHEREAS, Congress and the FCC have kept this matter open for continued review; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, convened at its 2012 Winter Committee Meetings in Washington, D.C., encourages wireless carriers to continue their efforts to streamline consumer access to updated information by investigating and implementing methods to receive immediate information on account usage for each service they have along with usage balances rather than waiting for notifications; and be it further

RESOLVED, That NARUC thanks the wireless industry for recognizing that government and consumer bodies can work with industry to benefit consumers and industry for the common good of our country.

Sponsored by the Committee on Telecommunications
Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors February 8, 2012