



Rural areas still failing to receive calls

Despite the FCC's efforts and enforcement actions, rural consumers and businesses continue to fail to receive calls. According to a recent NTCA (National Telephone Cooperative Association) survey regarding call completion, 80% of the association's members indicated they have experienced call completion problems in the past year. More than one-fourth stated that they receive complaints from subscribers at least weekly.

According to the survey results, the vast majority of failing calls are intended for subscribers of rural local exchange carriers (RLECS), like West Texas Rural Telephone Cooperative. The failed calls are due to "least-cost long distance providers" deciding not to send calls to rural America because it is costlier to operate in the rural areas. They are known to place a "false ring" on the call so that the calling party hears a ring, but the called party doesn't receive the call.

This problem has serious implications. Businesses operating in rural America

have reported that they have lost business because they did not receive the call. A neighboring telephone cooperative reported that a member called her doctor in Lubbock with concerns about the effects of the medication she was prescribed. The doctor's office heard a ring when they called the

patient. The patient never received a call. The situation could have been life threatening.

After years of advocacy initiatives by NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association and its members, rural call completion legislation will move to the Senate
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NTCA , lawmakers continue arguments against FCC's proposed set-top box rules

Staff of the National Telephone Cooperative Association —the Rural Broadband Association and lawmakers have continued to argue that the FCC should abandon proposed rules regarding set-top boxes.

The proposed rules could impact consumer privacy and customer service, adding significant costs for small rural multi-channel video programming distributors (MVPDs) that can ill afford such expenses.

NTCA staff say proposed rules could lead to a pause in innovation in the MVPD industry , discourag-

ing small rural distributors operating in a "break even at best" line of business, and making them likely to hold back on investments in improving quality and availability of their networks for fear of additional investments being needed to comply with new rules.

NTCA, rural reps and lawmakers further argued that consumer demand and the market may achieve the FCC's goals absent regulatory intervention, making the proposal unnecessary at this time.

The NTCA/lawmaker group stated that a per-
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RURAL CALLS
STILL FAILING

SET-TOP BOX
RULE ARGUMENTS

PAGE 2
ADVERTISE
"ON LOCAL
TELEVISION"

CUSTOMIZED
PHONE SYSTEMS
ARE AVAILABLE

Pay by draft, get a 1% discount

WT Services customers can receive a one percent discount by paying their bill by bank draft.

Customers who authorize draft payment agree to have their bank account drafted for the amount of their outstanding balance on their account with WT Services. Drafts will occur between the 20th and 23rd of each month.

To arrange for payment of your WT Services bill via bank draft and net the one percent savings, contact the WT Services office in Herford at 119 East 4th or in Friona at 1010 Columbia to obtain the necessary authorization form that includes bank routing and account information.

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for consideration. Under the leadership of Chairman John Thune (R-SD), members of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee voted during an executive session in late June to advance the Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act.

The legislation requires least-cost routers to register with and follow standards set by the FCC. Additionally, to ensure greater transparency in the call completion marketplace, originating providers must use registered least-cost routers in seeking to complete their calls.

NTCA issued a statement from Chief Executive Officer Shirley Bloomfield applauding the committee's action.

"NTCA thanks Sen. Amy Klouchar for her sponsorship of the bill, her unwavering support of rural America and dedication to ending the call completion issue that has been plaguing rural communities for years. The advancement of the Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act of 2016 to the full Senate for consideration is another important milestone

in seeking a resolution that has been a long time coming. We also appreciate Committee Chairman John Thune's (R-SD) continued leadership on this issue that ensured the legislation's path to passage continues.

Still hoping to get in a last-minute garage sale before summer gets away? Have a class reunion, anniversary celebration or other event coming up soon?

You can easily place information about upcoming events in Friona/Bovina "on TV" via cable television channels.

Simply contact the WT Services office in Friona at 250-5555 and you'll find

Customized phone systems available from WT Services

Telephone systems customized to your needs are available from WT Services.

Systems can be designed for your business and office needs.

A representative from WT Services will visit your location to determine needs, write a proposal, and arrange for installation

inability of people to receive phone calls weakens the reliability of our telecommunications networks and threatens the safety, commerce and well-being of people not just in rural America but throughout

staff ready to help you in getting your message on the local cable TV channel. Business ads and announcements can be run for \$25 a week or \$80 a month.

Ads announcing observance of milestone events like anniversary celebrations or special birthday observances are \$25 a week.

Garage sale ads are \$10 a day or \$15 for two days.

In Friona, ads are limited

the country. We are optimistic this legislation can play an important role in putting an end to the issue once and for all and we look forward to continued engagement with Congress and the FCC."

to text only and are also limited as to the number of pages available to carry them.

Accordingly, ads placed need to be 40 words or less, and are placed on a "Space Permitting" basis, so it's best to plan ahead when making arrangements to place items on cable.

Composed ads can be faxed to the Friona WT Services office at 250-5550.

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permanent exemption for small MVPDs serving less than one million subscribers would be welcome to ensure that small providers are not forced out of the market by an immediate need to comply with proposed rules.

NTCA has filed comments and reply comments urging the FCC to reconsider its proposal.