

At FCC, UTC and UTC members propose important safety and operations changes to further FCC's broadband goals

UTC, together with Dominion Energy and Xcel Energy as well as the utilities' outside counsel LermanSenter (Utilities), met with the office of [FCC Chair Brendan Carr](#), with [Commissioner Olivia Trusty](#) and with the office of [Commissioner Gomez](#) to discuss the draft Fifth Report and Order, Fourth Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and Orders on Reconsideration (Draft Report and Order) in [WC Docket No. 17-84](#). The item is on the agenda for the next Open Commission meeting on Thursday, July 24.

During the meeting, the Utilities raised several critical issues for the FCC to consider before voting on the items. Specifically, the Utilities expressed their concerns about proposed rules in the Draft Report and Order regarding contractor approvals and make-ready work timelines and proposed revisions intended to balance safety, utility operations, and the FCC's broadband development goals.

On the Contractor Approval Timeline in Section 1.1412(e), the Utilities objected to the 30-day deadline for approving third-party contractors, especially for those performing complex work above the communications space on utility poles. By clarifying that the 30-day "deemed-approved" deadline applies to crews working only in the communications space, the FCC would align with its own 2018 Pole Attachment Order which recognized the inherent safety and reliability risks in performing work above the communications space on the pole and therefore required an attacher to use the utility's list of approved contractors for such work.

Regarding the Make-Ready Notification Timeline in Section 1.1411(f)(4), the Utilities advocated for changes to the proposed rule that would require utilities to notify new attachers within 15 days of survey completion if they cannot meet make-ready deadlines. The Utilities proposed that the FCC should instead start the 15-day clock after payment of the estimate is received, not after survey completion and that the FCC should require existing attachers to notify both the utility and new attacher within 15 days of the utility's notice if they cannot meet the make-ready deadline. The Utilities emphasized that this This requested adjustment to the date that triggers the new notice requirement will ensure that attachers receive timely and relevant information.