

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JONATHAN S. ADELSTEIN**

Re: Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities, Order (CC Docket No. 98-67, CG Docket No. 03-123).

Through this Order, the Commission adopts compensation rates for the critical services supported through the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) Fund. These relay services serve as vital connections for and to millions of hearing-impaired and speech-impaired Americans. Without federal and state TRS services, these citizens would be left out of the vital communications networks that link our economy and society.

I support this Order because it adopts reasonable compensation rates for the traditional TRS, IP Relay Services, and Video Relay Services (VRS). Calculating the compensation rate for VRS, which is an increasingly important tool, proved particularly difficult this year because certain key VRS rules are in flux. I am pleased that the Commission was able to take into account these open questions and find a flexible approach to address the compensation of these services. The challenges presented here do underscore, however, the importance of moving forward to address open quality of service issues, such as the speed of answer and interoperability, and our open proceeding on improving our rules and process for setting the VRS compensation rate. I look forward to working closely with my colleagues to resolve these issues quickly.