

The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance.

Alan Watts



# **Wireless RERC Policy Retrospective: Strategies to Effect Change**

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When the winds of change  
blow, some people  
build walls and  
others build windmills.  
-Chinese proverb

# Importance of Participation

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**Technology development is outpacing regulations that govern industry.**

**Accessibility and inclusion principles should be applied early and throughout the process.**

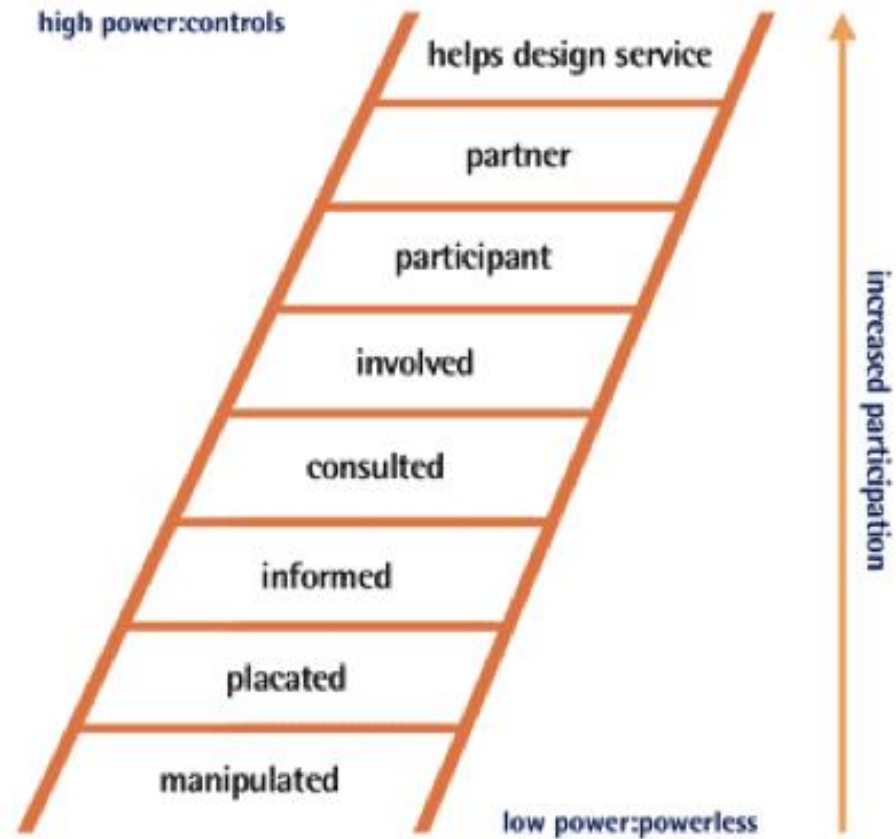
**Transitioning from reactive to proactive policy requires:**

- Stakeholder input
- Anticipation of impacts and outcomes of new tech

**Agencies are increasing the solicitation of public input:**

- Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
- National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)
- U.S. Access Board
- National Council on Disabilities (NCD)

# The ladder of participation



Thorburn, Lewis and Shemmings, 1995

# What is influenced?

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## **Policy**

- Proposed rules
- Final rules

## **Industry guidance**

- Tech development
- Business practices

## **The market**

- Accessibility features in mainstream wireless technologies

## **The user experience**

- Improved access to and utility of devices and services
- Increased adoption and decreased abandonment



# Wireless RERC Participation History

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## **Submitted comments to more than 60 rulemakings**

- Initial comments
- Reply Comments
- Ex parte comments

## **Quoted and referenced more than 170 times**

## **FCC Advisory Committees**

- Consumer Advisory Committee
- Disability Advisory Committee

## **Topics:**

- Broadband
- Emergency Communications
- Hearing Aid Compatible (HAC) cell phones
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA)



# Keep your ear to the ground

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## **How we do it, You can too.**

- Federal Register
- Headline curating services (e.g. Feedly)
- Social Media
- Agency websites (keywords)
- Open Commission meetings
- Newsletters



# Pragmatic Advice

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## **FCC Rulemakings:**

- Public Notice
- Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
- Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Further Notice...
- Report & Order

## **Comment Deadlines**

Federal Register

## **Writing to get cited**

- Refer to specific sections of the rulemaking
- Include support for your recommendations

## **Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS)**

- <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/>

# Measuring Impact

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## RESEARCH, REPORT, REPEAT

- **Market analysis**
  - Ex: WEA-capable Device Accessibility Review
  - Report findings to appropriate stakeholders
- **User research**
  - Has compliance translated into accessibility and usability for the end-user?
- **Engage**
  - Explain identified barriers and recommend solutions
  - Filings, Briefings, Committee Participation
- **Follow-up post ruling**
  - Repeat accessibility review to assess any changes
  - Extent to which manufacturers have responded

# Conclusion

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# Contact & Connect

<http://www.wirelessrerc.gatech.edu/>

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join our



Accessible Technology Policy Group

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