Technology and Disability Policy Highlights

June 2013



# Overview

A new bill, *Strengthening America’s Schools Act of 2013* [S.1094], was introduced in June by the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions to revise the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) of 1965 of which *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) was the last rewrite. By allowing States the flexibility to institute their own college- and career-ready standards, performance targets, academic assessments, and accountability models, the bill’s sponsors hope to ensure all students are college and career ready. The bill proposes to integrate requirements of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), student assessment standards, and provisions for universal design for technology and innovations used in schools.

In regulatory news, the FCC released a *Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* outlining steps to reduce fraud and waste within the Video Relay Service (VRS) program. The *Report and Order* introduces a single compensation rate, a national outreach program and a user registration database, while the FNPRM seeks comment on many aspects of the VRS program including compensation rates, research and development of VRS, functionality of 911 calls via VRS, and compliance with speed of answer requirements. The FCC also issued an *Order on Reconsideration and Further* *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* (FNPRM) regarding the rules for the captioning of IP-delivered video programming for certain apparatus. The *Order and FNPRM* clarify the definition of video player and grant waivers for apparatus that are not designed to transmit video programming, while extending compliance deadlines and seeking comment on compliance for DVD and Blu-Ray players. Finally, the FCC Media Bureau released a Public Notice seeking comment on video description rules. Specifically, the Media Bureau seeks comment on the availability and consumer usage of video description, the extent to which video description is being provided voluntarily, methods by which consumers are made aware of video description, and the costs, benefits and technical issues associated with providing video descriptions for video programming distributed on the internet.

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# Legislative Activities

## New Education Bill Integrates IDEA Requirements

June 6, 2013 — U.S. Senator Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, introduced the *Strengthening America’s Schools Act of 2013* [S.1094] (SASA), a comprehensive bill to make many changes to the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) of 1965 of which *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) was the last rewrite.  SASA focuses on ensuring that all students are “college and career ready,” by allowing States to adapt individual content and assessment standards in addition to “accountability systems and interventions to improve schools;” promoting early childhood education and parent and family engagement, and supporting a “well-rounded” education, which includes an emphasis on mental health. The bill also proposes to integrate requirements of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), student assessment standards, and provisions for universal design for technology and innovations used in schools.

#### Additional Information

[Strengthening America's Schools Act of 2013: Bill Text](http://www.help.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/ESEA%20Bill%20Text%206.4.13.pdf)

[<http://www.help.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/ESEA%20Bill%20Text%206.4.13.pdf>]

[Bill One-Pager](http://www.help.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/ESEA%20One%20Pager%206.4.13.pdf)

[<http://www.help.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/ESEA%20One%20Pager%206.4.13.pdf>]

[Senate Hearing](http://www.help.senate.gov/hearings/hearing/?id=9df7d755-5056-a032-524b-f74853bd2a26)

[<http://www.help.senate.gov/hearings/hearing/?id=9df7d755-5056-a032-524b-f74853bd2a26>]

# Regulatory Activities

## FCC’s Clyburn Speaks to the Future of Accessibility

June 6, 2013 — The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Acting Chairwoman Mignon Clyburn addressed the M-Enabling Summit concerning trends in accessible technology. In her address, Clyburn noted that historically, the needs of people with disabilities have been overlooked, stating “it was often years, and sometimes decades before persons with disabilities were given anything remotely approaching equal access to communications like telephones, television and cellphones.” Accordingly, Clyburn emphasized the vital need and unique opportunity to ensure availability and accessibility of broadband and other technologies, including adjustable fonts and color contrasts, speech-to-text, and text-to-speech in cell phones, greater availability of closed captioning and video descriptions, and text-to-911.  Clyburn ended her address by noting that there are no more excuses for not making products and services accessible, “for the tools and technologies are readily available to make this happen.”

#### Additional Information

[Prepared Remarks of FCC Acting Chairwoman Mignon L. Clyburn](http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0607/DOC-321475A1.pdf)

[<http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0607/DOC-321475A1.pdf>]

## Reducing Fraud and Waste in the Video Relay Service Program

June 10, 2013 — The FCC released a Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking i*n* the *Matter of Structure and Practices of the Video Relay Service Program and Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities* [CG Docket No. 10-51 and 03-123]. The Report and Order outlines steps to decrease “waste, fraud and abuse” of the Video Relay Service (VRS) program through the institution of a “unitary market-based compensation rate” to replace the previous tiered compensation, explicit contracts for research and development to replace the previous per-minute additional charge, the creation of a national outreach program, measures to promote standards for interoperability, and the creation of a user registration database. The FCC seeks comment on many aspects of the VRS program including compensation rates, auctioning the rights for specific VRS service providers to provider service to specific phone numbers, an agreement with the National Science Foundation to provide research and development, functionality of 911 calls via VRS, compliance with speed of answer requirements, and replacement of the current TRS Fund Advisory Council. Initial comments are due 25 days after publication in the Federal Register, and reply comments are due 50 days after publication in the Federal Register.

#### Additional Information

[Report and Order and NPRM [CG Docket No. 10-51 and 03-123]](http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0610/FCC-13-82A1.pdf)

[[http://www.fcc.gov/document/user-interface-ghttp://transition.fcc.gov/Daily\_Releases/Daily\_Business/2013/db0610/FCC-13-82A1.pdfuide-and-menu-accessibility](http://www.fcc.gov/document/user-interface-ghttp%3A/transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0610/FCC-13-82A1.pdfuide-and-menu-accessibility)]

## FCC Clarifying Rules for IP-Video Captions

June 14, 2013 — The FCC released an *Order on Reconsideration and Further* *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* (FNPRM) *in the Matter of Closed Captioning of Internet Protocol-Delivered Video Programming: Implementation of the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010* [MB Docket No. 11-154]. The Order on Reconsideration addresses concerns from stakeholders, including the Consumer Electronics Association, TVGuardian, and consumer groups, concerning the rules for the captioning of IP-delivered video programming for certain apparatus.  Specifically, the Order clarifies the definition of “video player” to ensure the rules apply to “video player(s) capable of displaying video programming transmitted simultaneously with sound,” while granting waivers to apparatus that are not designed to transmit video programming, such as certain digital cameras.  In addition, the Order clarifies that the January 1, 2014 compliance deadline applies to the date of manufacture of apparatus and provides an extension for DVD and Blu-Ray players. The Order affirms that the rules allow for “rendering *or* pass through of captions,” and does not limit providers to pass through captioning only.  In the FNPRM, the FCC seeks comment on requirements for the synchronization of closed captions and video display in addition to the closed caption requirements for DVD and Blu-Ray players that “do not render or pass through closed captions.” Initial comments are due 60 days after publication in the Federal Register, and reply comments are due 90 days after publication.

#### Additional Information

[Order on Reconsideration and FNPRM [MB Docket No. 11-154]](http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0614/FCC-13-84A1.pdf)

[<http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0614/FCC-13-84A1.pdf>]

## Settlement on Hearing Aid Compatibility Rules for Wireless Phones

June 21, 2013 — The FCC has settled with Airadigm Communications and TeleGuam Holdings following investigations into lack of compliance with hearing aid compatibility rules. The rules ensure that people with hearing aids are able to use wireless phones “without excessive feedback or noise.”  Airadigm and TeleGuam Holdings have agreed to pay $260,000 and $280,000 respectively in voluntary payments, in addition to ensuring future compliance through “robust compliance plans that include new operating procedures, comprehensive training of employees and agents, and periodic reporting requirements.”  Commenting on the settlement, Acting FCC Chairwoman Mignon Clyburn noted that “Wireless technology is transforming the very fabric of our lives. We must continue to ensure that all Americans – regardless of their hearing disability or where they live – can enjoy the benefits these technologies have to offer.”

#### Additional Information

[FCC Press Release](http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0621/DOC-321755A1.pdf)

[<http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0621/DOC-321755A1.pdf>]

## FCC Task Force Addresses Communications Transition

June 21, 2013 — The Acting Director of the FCC Technology Transitions Policy Task Force, Sean Lev addressed the TIA Network Transition Event in June, concerning the “multifaceted communications transition” currently underway in the United States.  Specifically, Lev noted recent years have seen significant decreases in circuit switch telephone service complemented by increases in use of VOIP and wireless and the replacement of copper networks with fiber. Lev emphasized that “it is the responsibility of the FCC, working with our state, local, and Tribal partners, consumers, and industry, to make sure our policies keep pace with this rapidly evolving landscape.”  Going forward, the Task Force plans to implement localized technology trials, concerning issues such as Next Generation 911 or transitions to wireless services, to help aid in policy decisions.

#### Additional Information

[Prepared Remarks of Sean Lev](http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0624/DOC-321781A1.pdf)

[<http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0624/DOC-321781A1.pdf>]

## FCC’s Media Bureau Seeks Comment on Video Descriptions

June 25, 2013 — The FCC Media Bureau released a Public Notice [MB Docket No 11-43] seeking comment on the video description rules that were released on August 25, 2011 in accordance with the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010.  Currently, the rules require certain television broadcast stations and MVPDs “to provide video description for a portion of the video programming they offer to consumers.”  The Media Bureau seeks comment on the availability of video description, the extent to which video description is being provided voluntarily, the consumer usage of video description, and methods by which consumers are made aware of video description.  In addition, the Media Bureau seeks comment on any technical or operational issues concerning video descriptions for video programming distributed on the Internet.  The need for “technologies or other functionalities that must be developed to accommodate the delivery of video-described programming on the internet,” and the costs and benefits of providing such a service.  Initial comments are due September 4, 2013, and reply comments are due October 2, 2013.

#### Additional Information

[Public Notice [MB Docket No. 11-43]](http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0625/DA-13-1438A1.pdf)

[<http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0625/DA-13-1438A1.pdf>]

# Publications and Reports

## User Agent Accessibility Guidelines Updated

June 7, 2013 — W3C published an updated version of the recently released working draft *Implementing User Agent Accessibility Guidelines (UAAG) 2.0*. The draft provides guidance for designing accessible user agents, which include “web browsers and other types of software that retrieve and render web content.”  The updated version of the draft now includes mobile accessibility examples to demonstrate how “web browsers that follow UAAG benefit people with disabilities.” Some examples include individuals who may need to use alternative content for images to prevent excessive scrolling or need to set closed captioning as the default for all videos. W3C is seeking comment on the draft, specifically concerning accessibility guidelines for mobile web applications, the clarity of guidelines, whether only certain guidelines must be met for development of user agents for specific platforms, and the availability of “sufficient examples of other technologies that support accessibility.”  Comments on the draft are due by June 21, 2013 to public-uaag2-comments@w3.org.

#### Additional Information

[Implementing UAAG 2.0](http://www.w3.org/TR/IMPLEMENTING-UAAG20/mobile)

[<http://www.w3.org/TR/IMPLEMENTING-UAAG20/mobile>]

## Update on Broadband Adoption and Use

June 7, 2013 — The Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) released *Exploring the Digital Nation: America’s Emerging Online Experience*, a report describing the adoption and use of broadband in the United States.  According to the report broadband is available to over 90% of Americans, but the percentage who actually use it in the home is about  70%. Reasons cited for the disparity include cost and the perception that there is no need to use the Internet at home.  Adoption rates also varied according to demographics.  For example, broadband adoption was lower among rural households, households headed by a person with a disability, and households with lower income.  Nevertheless, the NTIA report argues that broadband adoption can be beneficial for finding employment, career training, accessing medical information, encouraging civic engagement, and accessing financial information and consumer services.

#### Additional Information

[Exploring the Digital Nation](http://www.ntia.doc.gov/files/ntia/publications/exploring_the_digital_nation_-_americas_emerging_online_experience.pdf)

[<http://www.ntia.doc.gov/files/ntia/publications/exploring_the_digital_nation_-_americas_emerging_online_experience.pdf>]

## Study Tests iPads as Communication Devices for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

June 11, 2013 — The New Mexico Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NMCDHH) released the final report on results from their iPad Pilot Project.  The project arose from recognition of the decreasing number of requests for telecommunications equipment, although hearing disabilities is the third fastest growing disability, and at the same time as an increased demand for more mainstream and wireless devices. For the project 25 individuals with disabilities, including deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and speech disabilities, were given WiFi-only iPads and asked to test the ease of use of the device, as well as specific communication apps and the “feasibility of adding iPad equipment to the existing NMCDHH Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program.”  The results showed that over four months, users became more comfortable with the device, with most testers using the iPad daily. More than half of the testers recognized the iPad as their primary communication tool by the end of the testing period. Users also tested specific communications apps including Dragon Dictation, Tap to Talk, Proloquo2go, Skype, and Sorenson, with some users in addition testing emergency notification apps.

#### Additional Information

[New Mexico iPad Pilot Final Report](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Csalimah%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5CIGUYAEWB%5CPILOT_FINAL_REPORT_061113.pdf)

[[PILOT\_FINAL\_REPORT\_061113.pdf](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Csalimah%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5CIGUYAEWB%5CPILOT_FINAL_REPORT_061113.pdf)]

## Serving the Whole Community through IPAWS

June 12, 2013 — The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) released *Alerting the Whole Community: Removing Barriers to Alerting Accessibility*, a report outlining the current efforts made to ensure accessibility for people with access and functional needs within the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS). According to the report, approximately 25% of Americans may need “assistance or accommodation to receive emergency alerts,” including people with disabilities and limited English proficiency. The report highlights that IPAWS works to increase accessibility of alerts for all individuals through multi-modal and geo-targeted dissemination while implementing standards that “developers of accessibility products and services can modify their products and services so end-users will receive alerts issued through the IPAWS system.”  Noted challenges to ensuring accessible alerts and warnings, as noted by the report, include educating the public as to the importance and capabilities of IPAWS, and adoption of IPAWS within all communities.

#### Additional Information

[Alerting the Whole Community: Removing Barriers to Alerting Accessibility](http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=7599)

[<http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=7599>]

## Using TTY Terminals as a Text-to-911 Solution

June 14, 2013 — The Emergency Access Advisory Committee (EAAC) of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a report entitled *Proposed Procedures for the TTY as a text terminal in legacy 9-1-1 PSAPs without IP Connection*, which outlines the use of TTY terminals as a text-to-911 interim solution for Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) without IP connectivity.  The report highlighted that TTY may lack some capabilities often used in SMS text messages.  For example, TTY messages have a limited set of characters available for use, are unable to use both upper and lowercase letters in the same message, and only one message can be transmitted at a time, otherwise “character loss or garbling occurs.”  Despite the limitations, for those PSAPs without IP connection, the EAAC noted that the use of an application for message-to-TTY conversion can allow interim solutions for those PSAPs to receive and respond to text-to-911 messages.  According to the EAAC, the roll-out of text-to-911 will be intermittent, which may cause confusion for consumers who may be able to send an SMS message in one county but not the next.  The EAAC therefore noted the importance of trying to make text-to-911 interoperable with legacy technology.

#### Additional Information

[Proposed procedures for the TTY as a text terminal in legacy 9-1-1 PSAPs without IP connection](http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0619/DOC-321704A1.pdf)

[<http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0619/DOC-321704A1.pdf>]

# Other Items of Interest

## AbleData Request for Proposals

June 3, 2013 — The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) in association with the Department of Education issued a request for proposals for the evaluation, operation and maintenance of AbleData, a database and website providing information on assistive equipment for people with disabilities. AbleData provides information including “descriptions, availability, manufacturers, distributors and publications” for over 20,000 commercially available devices and 1,800 noncommercial prototypes used to aid people with disabilities. Proposals are due July 5, 2013 by 12:00 PM.

#### Additional Information

[NIDRR RFP [ED-OSE-13-R-0015]](https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&tab=core&id=04423cf270b4d0cfa91f849d9e510cc1&_cview=0)

[<https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&tab=core&id=04423cf270b4d0cfa91f849d9e510cc1&_cview=0>]

## New Accessibility Initiative from Sprint and United Cerebral Palsy

June 3, 2013 — Sprint and United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) announced that they will collaborate to promote Sprint Relay Services, including Sprint’s newest speech-to-speech service, with the Accessibility-for-All Initiative. The Relay Program offers a variety of communication services, including Sprint IP Relay Service, the Sprint Mobile IP App, Sprint CapTel Services, Relay Conference Captioning, as well as traditional Relay Services to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, or have speech disabilities.  The new speech-to-speech service allows people with speech disabilities to call a trained Sprint operator who will then repeat their words, or provide synthesizer output to the other person. Stephen Bennett, the President and CEO of UCP noted that “UCP is excited to be teaming with Sprint Relay to help raise awareness of the services they provide that can really make an incredible difference in the day-to-day lives of so many people.”

#### Additional Information

[Accessibility for All Initiative](http://newsroom.sprint.com/news-releases/sprint-teams-with-united-cerebral-palsy-on-communications-accessibility-for-all-initiative.htm)

[<http://newsroom.sprint.com/news-releases/sprint-teams-with-united-cerebral-palsy-on-communications-accessibility-for-all-initiative.htm>]

## New Smartphone and Services for People who are Blind or have Low Vision

June 6, 2013 — Project Ray, a smartphone developer, and Odin Mobile, a cellphone services provider, announced the release of the first smartphone and accompanying services specifically designed for people who are blind or have low vision.  According to Project RAY, the phone, designed for eye-free operation, is affordable and offers built-in services such as “voice calls, email, messaging contact list services, calendar, GPS, advanced WEB remote assistance, voice recorder, panic and emergency services, color identification, pictures transcription and banknote recognition.” In addition, services provided by Odin Mobile include “voice, text and data, with customized eye-free setup and services.”  Boaz Zilberman, CEO of Project RAY, notes that the “RAY smartphone in collaboration with Odin Mobile’s full-cellular services for the blind and visually impaired will finally bring to this important community the same services available to the mainstream full-sighted community.”

#### Additional Information

[Project RAY News Release](http://www.project-ray.com/wp-content/uploads/RAY-OdinMobile-Press-Release-6.6.13.pdf)

[<http://www.project-ray.com/wp-content/uploads/RAY-OdinMobile-Press-Release-6.6.13.pdf>]

## Disability Research Funding Opportunities

June 11, 2013 — The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) has announced final priorities and award applications for Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Programs (ARRTs), Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs), and Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs) in the following areas.

* Community Living and Participation (ARRT)
* Employment (ARRT)
* Health and Function (ARRT)
* Strategies, Techniques, and Interventions (RERC)
* Information and Communication Technologies Access (RERC)
* Individual Mobility and Manipulation (RERC)
* Physical Access and Transportation (RERC)
* Technologies to Support Successful Aging (RERC)
* Universal Interfaces and Information Technology Access (RERC)
* Research and Capacity Building for Minority Entities (RRTC)
* Promoting Healthy Aging for Individuals with Long-Term Physical Disabilities (RRTC)
* Disability in Rural Areas (RRTC)

The estimated available award ranges from $150,000 to $925,000 depending on the program. Applications for awards are available beginning June 7, 2013, and the final deadline for applications range from August 6, 2013 to August 19, 2013.

#### Additional Information

[NIDRR Final Priority [FR Doc No: 2013-13861] ARRTs](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-11/html/2013-13861.htm)

[<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-11/html/2013-13861.htm>]

[NIDRR Award Application [FR Doc No: 2013-13862] ARRTs](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-11/html/2013-13862.htm)

[<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-11/html/2013-13862.htm>]

NIDRR Final Priority [FR Doc No: 2013-13851] RERC

[<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-11/html/2013-13851.htm>]

[NIDRR Award Application [FR Doc No: 2013-13853] RERC](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-11/html/2013-13853.htm)

[<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-11/html/2013-13853.htm>]

[NIDRR Final Priority [FR Doc No: 2013-14219] RERC](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-14/html/2013-14219.htm)

[<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-14/html/2013-14219.htm>]

[NIDRR Award Application [FR Doc No: 2013-14220] RERC](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-14/html/2013-14220.htm)

[<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-14/html/2013-14220.htm>]

[NIDRR Final Priority [FR Doc No: 2013-14227]](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-14/html/2013-14227.htm) RRTCs

[<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-14/html/2013-14227.htm>]

[NIDRR Award Application [FR Doc No: 2013-14222] RRTCs](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-14/html/2013-14222.htm)

[<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-14/html/2013-14222.htm>]

[NIDRR Final Priority [FR Doc No: 2013-14652] RERC](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-19/html/2013-14652.htm)

[<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-19/html/2013-14652.htm>]

[NIDRR Award Application [FR Doc No: 2013-14654] RERC](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-19/html/2013-14654.htm)

[<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-19/html/2013-14654.htm>]

[NIDRR Final Priority [FR Doc No: 2013-15605] RRTC](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-28/html/2013-15605.htm)

[<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-28/html/2013-15605.htm>]

[NIDRR Award Application [FR Doc No: 2013-15598] RRTC](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-28/html/2013-15598.htm)

[<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-28/html/2013-15598.htm>]

## New International Treaty for Accessible Books

June 26, 2013 — The World Intellectual Property Organization met at the end of June to finalize the terms of a treaty which would legally allow for copyrighted material to be made accessible to people who are blind or have low vision. Currently, less than one percent of all the world’s books are available in accessible formats including Braille, large print or audio recordings. However, under the treaty, authorized entities will be able to copy materials in accessible formats “without authorization of the copyright right holder.”  According to Marc Maurer, the president of the National Federation of the Blind, “This historic treaty, the first ever international instrument specifically addressing the needs of the world’s blind, will dramatically increase access to published works and the empowering information and ideas they contain by a community that has traditionally experienced barriers to obtaining the world’s knowledge.”

#### Additional Information

[Washington Post: "Group finalizes treaty to expand book access for world's blind community"](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-tech/post/group-finalizes-treaty-to-expand-book-access-for-worlds-blind-community/2013/06/26/461311fe-de83-11e2-948c-d644453cf169_blog.html?wprss=rss_post-tech)

[<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-tech/post/group-finalizes-treaty-to-expand-book-access-for-worlds-blind-community/2013/06/26/461311fe-de83-11e2-948c-d644453cf169_blog.html?wprss=rss_post-tech>]

[Draft of the Treaty](http://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/diplconf/en/vip_dc/vip_dc_8.pdf)

[<http://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/diplconf/en/vip_dc/vip_dc_8.pdf>]

# Wireless RERC Updates

## Wireless Technology Use and Disability Presentation at CTIA’s Wireless 2013 Accessibility Outreach Initiative

May 21, 2013 — Wireless RERC researcher John Morris gave a presentation on “Wireless Technology Use and Disability: Results from the Survey of User Needs at CTIA's Wireless 2013 Accessibility Outreach Initiative (AOI).” John, along with other disability and consumer advocacy experts, joined a roundtable discussion on wireless accessibility and consumer needs for industry and federal regulatory professionals. Below is a PDF of John's presentation that includes his speaking notes.

#### View Full Document Below

[PDF of Presentation on Wireless Technology Use and Disability](http://wirelessrerc.org/sites/default/files/publications/Wireless_Technology_Use_and_Disability_CTIA_FINAL-SHORT_FINAL_notes.pdf)

[<http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=7599>]

## Wireless RERC Presents at M-Enabling Summit

June 6, 2013 — Wireless RERC researcher John Morris hosted a panel session entitled, “Mobility and Dexterity,” where he presented findings from the latest Wireless RERC Survey of User Needs (SUN). In addition, John presented the results of the RERC’s emergency communication survey in a panel session hosted by Marcie Roth, the Senior Advisor on Disability Issues for FEMA, entitled “Mobile Solutions for Accessible Emergency Services Across Borders.” Jim Muller also presented at the conference, in a session entitled “Visual Impairments: Assistive Apps and Solutions,” which was hosted by Darren Burton, Acting Director of AFB Tech for the American Foundation for the Blind. Jim presented the App Factory and gave a demonstration of BrailleTouch, one of the latest App Factory apps.

#### View Presentations Below

[PDF of Presentation on Mobility and Dexterity](http://g3ict.org/design/js/tinymce/filemanager/userfiles/File/PPT%202013/John%20Morris%20-%20WirelessRERC%20-%20June%206%20-%20Salon%205%2C6%2C7%20-%202-3.30pm%20-%20Mobility%20and%20Dexterity.pdf)

[PDF Presentation on Technology Use and Emergency Communications by People with Disabilities](http://g3ict.org/design/js/tinymce/filemanager/userfiles/File/Publications/PPT2/Wireless%20RERC_Emergency_m-Enabiling-2013.pdf)

## Sprint Announces New Smartphone and Accessible Education ID Packs

June 6, 2013 - Speaking at the M-Enabling Summit on June 6, Sprint CEO Dan Hesse announced that Sprint’s new LG Optimus F3 smartphone will be preloaded with TalkBack, Google’s accessibility app for the blind and visually impaired. Unlike other smartphones that require downloading and activation of Talkback, the Optimus F3 begins providing voice guidance to help with activation and setup as soon as the user powers up the phone. Sprint also announced the release of its new Accessible Education ID Pack, adding to its inventory of Accessibility ID Packs developed by Apps4Android with support from the US Department of Education through the Wireless RERC.

Sprint’s ID packs allow customers to download a bundle of content to select Android-powered devices, including the new LG Optimus F3. The Accessible Education ID pack features customized mobile Web services that eliminate clutter and display only the parts of Web pages of interest to the user. It also provides students who do not have computers or Internet connections at home with mobile-friendly interfaces and Web-based educational resources. The Accessible Education ID pack includes:

* Six applications that simplify access to WebMATH, a free Web site hosted by Discovery Education, that helps students learn how to solve math problems. Solutions to all problems are presented in a real-time, step-by-step, manner.
* KhAndroid: a fully accessible Android application that enables its users to view Khan Academy's library of more than 2,200 micro lectures via video tutorials. Topics covered include math, history, finance, physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy and economics.
* IDEAL Equation Finder: a speech recognition-based application, designed to take advantage of EqsQuest’s semantic search technology for math and science. Semantic search technology seeks to improve search accuracy by understanding a searcher’s intent and the contextual meaning of terms as they appear in searchable data spaces.

#### Additional Information

[Sprint's ID Accessibility Packs on the App Factory Project Page](http://www.wirelessrerc.org/node/162)

## CTIA Accessibility Outreach Initiative Webinar – June 13, 2013

June 13, 2013 — Wireless RERC Researchers Ben Lippincott and Salimah LaForce presented an overview of the Wireless RERC to industry representatives at a webinar hosted by CTIA’s Accessibility Outreach Initiative (AOI). Also discussed were services and other collaborative opportunities the RERC has available to offer CTIA member companies. Attendees included representatives from companies such as Verizon, BlackBerry, and Motorola.

#### View Full document Below

[Wireless RERC CTIA Web Conference](http://wirelessrerc.org/sites/default/files/publications/Wireless_RERC_CTIA_Web_Conference_2013-6-13_FINAL.pdf)

Upcoming Events

**U.S. Access Board to Discuss Accessible Prescription Labels**

The U.S. Access Board will meet on July 10, 2013 to discuss the findings from two advisory panels, the Medical Diagnostic Equipment Accessibility Standards Advisory Committee and the Working Group on Accessible Prescription Drug Container Labels. The Medical Diagnostic Equipment Accessibility Standards Advisory Committee will provide final recommendations for MDE accessibility standards, which addresses recommendations for “access to examination tables and chairs, weight scales, x-ray machines, mammography equipment, and other types of diagnostic equipment.” The Working Group on Accessible Prescription Drug Container Labels will present best practices for accessible prescription drug container labels. In researching best practices, the Working Group “explored various access alternatives, including Braille, large print labels, and auditory technologies such as ‘talking bottles.’” The meeting is will take place on July 10, 2013 at 1:30 EST at the Access Board Conference Room.

#### Additional Information

[U.S. Access Board Meeting](http://www.access-board.gov/news/Access%20Currents/May-June13.htm#mtg)

[<http://www.access-board.gov/news/Access%20Currents/May-June13.htm#mtg>]

**15th International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction (HCI)**

Wireless RERC researcher Dr. James White will present a paper entitled, *Social Media: Approaches to Defining an Ill-defined Phenomenon* at HCI International 2013 conference to be held July 21-26, 2013 at the Mirage Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA. Conference sessions will cover topics such as adaptive and personalized interfaces, Computer–augmented environments, Computer–based learning, Gesture and eye–gaze based interaction, Human Centered Design and User Centered Design, and Universal Usability.

#### Additional Information

[HCI International 2013](http://www.hcii2013.org/index.php?module=pagesmith&uop=view_page&id=7)

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<http://www.hcii2013.org/index.php?module=pagesmith&uop=view_page&id=7]>

**Technology and Disability Policy Highlights,** June 2013

Technology and Disability Policy Highlights reports on national and local public policy events and recent wireless technological advances and political activities; and tracks emerging issues of interest to individuals with disabilities. *Technology and Disability Policy Highlights* is published monthly by the Wireless RERC. The Wireless RERC is a research center that promotes universal access to wireless technologies and explores their innovative applications in addressing the needs of people with disabilities. To subscribe please visit our web site at [<http://www.wirelessrerc.org>].

For further information on items summarized in this report, or if you have items of interest that you would like included in future editions, please contact this edition’s editors, Braeden Benson [braeden@cacp.gatech.edu], Salimah LaForce [salimah.laforce@cacp.gatech.edu], or James White, Ph.D., [james@cacp.gatech.edu].

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This is a publication of the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center for Wireless Technologies supported by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research of the U.S. Department of Education, grant # H133E060061. The opinions contained in this publication are those of the grantee and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of Education.