

## VoIP Principles

The following principles are intended to provide a framework for the advancement of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technologies and the realization of their potential benefits. ITI believes that adherence to these principles will foster innovation, stimulate broadband demand, improve telecommunications networks, advance the economy, and bring about lower prices and enhanced communication services for consumers.

- **Establish National VoIP Policy.** The regulatory certainty necessary to attract investment and expand VoIP usage can best be achieved through a single national policy.
  - A patchwork of state or local regulations will inhibit the emerging VoIP marketplace and could result in arbitrary rules with broad and unintended future implications.
  - VoIP technologies are especially efficient because the packets of information are sent across networks using the fastest and least congested route. Accordingly, because some VoIP services transport packets across many different routes, it makes little sense to assign jurisdiction of a VoIP call to a specific state, city, or municipality when a packet could take many alternate routes before reaching its destination.
- **Limit Regulatory Burdens.** Like the Internet, we should encourage VoIP growth and competition by using little or no regulatory intervention.
  - We should not arbitrarily apply legacy regulations to new forms of communications which have blurred traditional regulatory lines by imposing existing access charges, tariffs, and other barriers to entry.
- **Continued Advancement of Public Interest Objectives.** VoIP service providers should remain committed to meeting public interest objectives, including access to essential emergency services.
  - Because some of the public interest objectives of our national telecommunications policy are not competition based, regular market forces may not address these important areas. ITI continues to support universal service, 911, disability access, law enforcement intercept ability, wiring of schools, libraries, and rural health facilities, with the acknowledgment that not all VoIP services should carry the same obligations.
- **Retain Consumer Protections.** Prohibitions against deceptive or misleading advertising should be retained so consumers can make sound and informed choices from a variety of offerings.
- **Recognize VoIP Variations.** It is important to note that not all VoIP uses and technologies are alike. Distinctions may therefore be necessary when assessing the appropriate level of oversight and regulation. ITI believes that voluntary industry efforts could resolve these issues.
- **Encourage Consistent International Regulation.** To realize the potential of VoIP technologies, the U.S. should work with international regulatory bodies to establish consistent guidelines for regulation of VoIP services.