**PENNSYLVANIA**

# **PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

**Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265**

Public Meeting held March 28, 2019

Commissioners Present:

Gladys M. Brown, Chairman

Andrew G. Place, Vice Chairman

Norman J. Kennard

David W. Sweet

John F. Coleman, Jr.

Pennsylvania Telecommunications Relay M-00900239

Service Advisory Board

**OPINION AND ORDER**

**BY THE COMMISSION:**

The Pennsylvania Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) is a communications service regulated by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (Commission) that offers a person with disabilities the ability to communicate “by wire or radio with a hearing individual in a manner that is functionally equivalent to the ability of a person who does not have a disability to communicate using voice communication services by wire or radio,” *i.e.*,access to the Public Switched Telephone Network in the same manner as a person without disability.[[1]](#footnote-2) TRS offers persons who are hearing, deaf, and hearing or speech impaired three ways to connect to the service using various means: Traditional Telephone Relay, Video Relay and Internet Relay. Users who access TRS by telephone simply dial 7-1-1 to connect to a skillfully-trained Communications Assistant, or CA, who follows a strict code of ethics and confidentiality for telephone TRS communications. The CA then relays messages to the other person. TRS is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

By Order entered May 29, 1990 (*May 29, 1990 Order*), the Commission established the Telecommunications Relay Service Advisory Board (TRS Advisory Board) for the purpose of reviewing the success of TRS in Pennsylvania. The TRS Advisory Board was also assigned the task of identifying any additional improvements which might need to be implemented to ensure the continued success of the TRS program. The TRS Advisory Board is composed of the following representatives: Hamilton Relay Inc. (Hamilton Relay) (1 representative who may serve unlimited terms); Hamilton Telephone Company d/b/a Hamilton Telecommunications (Hamilton Telephone) (1 representative who may serve unlimited terms);[[2]](#footnote-3) the Pennsylvania Telephone Association (1 representative who may serve unlimited terms); the Commission (2 representatives who may serve unlimited terms), the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry’s Office for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing (ODHH) (1 representative who may serve unlimited terms), and from the community of persons who are, or who have experience with, people who are deaf or hard of hearing, or those with language and speech disorders (7 representatives who may serve up to two two-year consecutive terms). The TRS Advisory Board meets quarterly in Harrisburg and functions as a user group providing guidance in such areas as problem solving and future enhancements.

The TRS Advisory Board By-Laws require one representative from the Commission’s Bureau of Consumer Services (BCS) to serve on the TRS Advisory Board. Article V, Section 5 of the By-Laws provides that members from the Commission may serve unlimited terms on the TRS Advisory Board. BCS has nominated Matthew Hrivnak to serve on the TRS Advisory Board for an unlimited term. The TRS Advisory Board supported his nomination. Accordingly, this Order shall memorialize the appointment of Mr. Hrivnak to the TRS Advisory Board for an unlimited term.

Mr. Hrivnak replaces Dan Romage who had been a Commission representative to the TRS Board before his reassignment of responsibilities. Mr. Hrivnak has been with BCS since 1997. In his tenure with BCS, he has held several positions including Interviewer, Investigator, Analyst, Supervisor, and Customer Assistance and Complaints Division Co-Division Chief. In May 2016, Hrivnak was promoted to Manager of Compliance and Competition in the BCS’s Policy Division where he and his staff review informal complaints filed against utilities and electric and gas suppliers for compliance. Additionally, he has been a member of the Commission’s Office of Competitive Market Oversight since 2010. On these bases, we conclude that Mr. Hrivnak will be a beneficial addition to the TRS Advisory Board and the residents it serves; **THEREFORE,**

**IT IS ORDERED:**

1. That the appointment of Mr. Matthew Hrivnak to the Pennsylvania Telecommunications Relay Service Advisory for an unlimited term is approved.

2. That the Secretary shall serve the appointee with a copy of this Opinion and Order at the address listed below:

Matthew Hrvinak

Bureau of Consumer Service

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

400 North Street

Harrisburg, PA 17120

** BY THE COMMISSION,**

Rosemary Chiavetta

Secretary

(SEAL)

ORDER ADOPTED: March 28, 2019

ORDER ENTERED: March 28, 2019

1. 35 P.S. § 6701.2; *see also* 35 P.S. § 6701.4. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Hamilton Relay is the certificated jurisdictional provider for intrastate TRS in the Commonwealth. *See* Docket No. A-2014-2447601. Hamilton Telephone is the contractual provider for intrastate Captioned Telephone Relay Service in the Commonwealth. *See* Docket No. A-311355. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)