

STATE OF NEW YORK

Public Service Commission

William M. Flynn, Chairman

Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223

Further Details: (518) 474-7080

<http://www.dps.state.ny.us>

FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATELY

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Captioned Telephone Service in New York for Hearing-Impaired Customers

-Three Hundred Phones to Be Installed Monthly-

Albany, NY—11/1/06— The New York State Public Service Commission (Commission) today announced the process for obtaining a CapTel phone commencing November 1, 2006. The purchase of a CapTel phone is necessary to receive captioned telephone service. Captioned telephone service benefits individuals who are hard of hearing, have experienced hearing loss later in life or deaf individuals who prefer to use their own voice. The service will be available starting on January 1, 2007 through Sprint, New York State's existing relay service provider

"I am pleased to see that the process of incorporating captioned telephone service in New York State is in motion," said Commission Chairman William M. Flynn. "The proposed roll out of 300 captioned phones per month will be the largest monthly installation rate of the service in the country. If demand should exceed this amount, I would expect that the industry will take a look at expanding the service and report back to the Commission."

In July 2006, the Commission voted to make captioned telephone service available starting in January 2007. To utilize the service, consumers must purchase a CapTel phone. The CapTel phones will be available on a first-come, first-served basis to customers seeking to purchase the phone and enroll for the captioned telephone service.

To obtain an order form to purchase a CapTel phone, consumers can visit the New York Relay Service Web site at www.nyrelay.com or contact CapTel at 800-233-9130 V/TTY. CapTel's <http://www.captionedtelephone.com/index/phtml> Web site also provides information to learn more about captioned telephone service.

Recent advancements in technology provide additional alternatives for hearing-impaired individuals. Increasingly, people with hearing loss are using new technologies such as captioned telephone and video relay service over the internet. Captioned telephone service uses a telephone that displays near real-time captions of the current conversation, thereby providing greater functional equivalency for the hearing impaired. The captions are displayed on a screen embedded into the telephone base. The service is similar to closed-captioning of television, or subtitles on DVD movies.

A copy of the Commission's order and notice in Case 06-C-0524 can be obtained from the Commission's Web site at <http://www.dps.state.ny.us> by accessing the Commission's Documents section of the homepage. Many public libraries offer free Internet access. Also the order and notice are available at the Commission's files office, 14th floor, 3 Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223 (518-474-2500).