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TN Consumer Federation

*(Recognized VCO by Ministry of Consumer Affairs &
Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection
(Regg 129/2009 as a Consumer advocacy group with TRAI)*

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To

The Advisor, Financial and Economic Analysis
Telecom Regulatory Authority of India
New Delhi

Subject: Counter-comments on the Draft Telecom Consumers
Protection (Thirteenth Amendment) Regulations, 2026

Reference: TRAI Draft Notification No. RG-8/(2)/2025-ADV_FEA-I
dated 7th April 2026

Respected Sir/Madam,

It is a great pleasure to know that the regulatory framework proposed by TRAI under the Telecom Consumers Protection (Thirteenth Amendment) Regulations, 2026 is intended for the benefit of telecom consumers.

We strongly believe that this amendment will protect consumer rights and provide equal and affordable recharge plans to every individual in the country.

I am submitting these counter-comments in support of affordable voice-only recharge plans for consumers. Digital inclusion should empower consumers, not force them into products they do not need. The objective of Digital India is to provide access and choice, not to make data services mandatory for every subscriber.

Millions of low-income users, senior citizens, and basic phone users rely only on voice calls and SMS services. They should have the freedom to choose affordable voice-only plans without being compelled to pay for data services that they neither use nor need.

Consumer choice is a fundamental principle of a fair and competitive market. Just as data users have multiple recharge options with different validity periods, voice-only users should also be offered similar options at proportionately

lower prices. The argument that digital inclusion requires mandatory data packs is not justified.

True inclusion means enabling every consumer to choose the service that best fits their needs and financial capacity.

I therefore request TRAI to ensure that telecom service providers offer standalone voice and SMS plans with multiple validity options and fair pricing, so that consumers are not forced to pay for bundled data services which they do not require.

Thank you for considering these submission

With regards,
Shivshankar Sekaran
CAG Member of TRAI