

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: 2019 State certification under 47 C.F.R. §54.313 and §54.314, annual reporting requirements for high-cost recipients and certification of support for eligible telecommunications carriers.

DOCKET NO. 20180122-TP
ORDER NO. PSC-2018-0455-FOF-TP
ISSUED: September 7, 2018

The following Commissioners participated in the disposition of this matter:

ART GRAHAM, Chairman
JULIE I. BROWN
DONALD J. POLMANN
GARY F. CLARK
ANDREW GILES FAY

ORDER AUTHORIZING ANNUAL UNIVERSAL SERVICE CERTIFICATION

BY THE COMMISSION:

Case Background

Section 254(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, provides in part, that a carrier that receives universal service support “shall use that support only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended.” States seeking federal high-cost support for carriers within their jurisdiction are required to file a certification annually with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and with the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC). The federal universal service high-cost program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service, both fixed and mobile, at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The program fulfills this universal service goal by allowing eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) that serve these areas to recover some of their costs from the federal Universal Service Fund.

Each Florida ETC filed an affidavit with the Florida Public Service Commission (Commission) attesting that funds received during the preceding calendar year and the upcoming calendar year have and will be used only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended. Our certification affirms that the federal high-cost funds flowing to carriers in the state have and will be used in a manner that comports with Section 254(e) of the 1996 Telecommunications Act. Certification is defined by 47 C.F.R. §54.314(a) as follows:

Certification of support for eligible telecommunications carriers

(a) Certification. States that desire eligible telecommunications carriers to receive support pursuant to the high-cost program must file an annual certification with the Administrator [USAC] and the Commission [FCC] stating that all federal high-cost support provided to such carriers within that State was used in the preceding calendar year and will be used in the coming calendar year only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended. High-cost support shall only be provided to the extent that the State has filed the requisite certification pursuant to this section.

In order for a carrier to be eligible for high-cost universal service support for all of calendar year 2019, we must submit certification by October 1, 2018. Based on prior support received by these carriers in Florida, we estimate that the amount of high-cost support these carriers will receive for 2019 will be approximately \$58 million.

Review and Decision

We have reviewed each of the carriers' affidavits and submissions to USAC. Each of the Florida ETCs receiving high-cost support has attested that all federal high-cost support provided to them within Florida was used in the preceding calendar year and will be used in the coming calendar year only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended.

Previously, we submitted certification to the FCC and USAC via USAC's online portal coupled with a separate letter from our Chairman. However, USAC's online certification process generates a letter that can be used to file state certification at the FCC, making a separate letter from the our Chairman unnecessary.

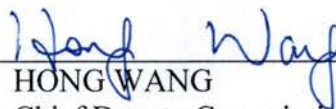
Having reviewed the ETCs' filings, we shall certify to USAC and to the FCC, through USAC's online portal and the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System, that BellSouth Telecommunications, LLC d/b/a AT&T Florida d/b/a AT&T Southeast; Embarq Florida, Inc. d/b/a CenturyLink; Frontier Florida LLC; Frontier Communications of the South, LLC; GTC, Inc. d/b/a Consolidated Communications/GTC; ITS Telecommunications Systems, Inc.; Knology of Florida, Inc. d/b/a WOW! Internet, Cable and Phone; Northeast Florida Telephone Company d/b/a NEFCOM; Quincy Telephone Company d/b/a TDS Telecom; Smart City Telecommunications LLC d/b/a Smart City Telecom; and Windstream Florida, LLC are eligible to receive federal high-cost support, that they have used the federal high-cost support in the preceding calendar year, and they will use the federal high-cost support they receive in the coming calendar year only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended.

Based on the foregoing, it is

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that we shall certify to USAC and to the FCC that BellSouth Telecommunications, LLC d/b/a AT&T Florida d/b/a AT&T Southeast; Embarq Florida, Inc. d/b/a CenturyLink; Frontier Florida LLC; Frontier Communications of the South, LLC; GTC, Inc. d/b/a Consolidated Communications/GTC; ITS Telecommunications Systems, Inc.; Knology of Florida, Inc. d/b/a WOW! Internet, Cable and Phone; Northeast Florida Telephone Company d/b/a NEFCOM; Quincy Telephone Company d/b/a TDS Telecom; Smart City Telecommunications LLC d/b/a Smart City Telecom; and Windstream Florida, LLC are eligible to receive federal high-cost support, that they have used the federal high-cost support in the preceding calendar year, and they will use the federal high-cost support they receive in the coming calendar year only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended. It is further

ORDERED that this docket is hereby closed.

By ORDER of the Florida Public Service Commission this 7th day of September, 2018.



HONG WANG
Chief Deputy Commission Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
(850) 413-6770
www.floridapsc.com

Copies furnished: A copy of this document is provided to the parties of record at the time of issuance and, if applicable, interested persons.

CWM

NOTICE OF FURTHER PROCEEDINGS OR JUDICIAL REVIEW

The Florida Public Service Commission is required by Section 120.569(1), Florida Statutes, to notify parties of any administrative hearing or judicial review of Commission orders that is available under Sections 120.57 or 120.68, Florida Statutes, as well as the procedures and time limits that apply. This notice should not be construed to mean all requests for an administrative hearing or judicial review will be granted or result in the relief sought.

Any party adversely affected by the Commission's final action in this matter may request:
1) reconsideration of the decision by filing a motion for reconsideration with the Office of Commission Clerk, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850, within

ORDER NO. PSC-2018-0455-FOF-TP

DOCKET NO. 20180122-TP

PAGE 4

fifteen (15) days of the issuance of this order in the form prescribed by Rule 25-22.060, Florida Administrative Code; or 2) judicial review by the Florida Supreme Court in the case of an electric, gas or telephone utility or the First District Court of Appeal in the case of a water and/or wastewater utility by filing a notice of appeal with the Office of Commission Clerk, and filing a copy of the notice of appeal and the filing fee with the appropriate court. This filing must be completed within thirty (30) days after the issuance of this order, pursuant to Rule 9.110, Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure. The notice of appeal must be in the form specified in Rule 9.900(a), Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure.