

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Request for relinquishment of eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) designation in Florida, by Frontier Communications of the South, LLC.

DOCKET NO. 20260113-TL
ORDER NO. PSC-2026-0378-PAA-TL
ISSUED: October 26, 2026

The following Commissioners participated in the disposition of this matter:

GABRIELLA PASSIDOMO SMITH, Chairman
GARY F. CLARK
MIKE LA ROSA
BOBBY PAYNE
ANA ORTEGA

NOTICE OF PROPOSED AGENCY ACTION
ORDER APPROVING REQUEST FOR RELINQUISHMENT OF
ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS DESIGNATION BY
FRONTIER COMMUNICATIONS OF THE SOUTH LLC

BY THE COMMISSION:

NOTICE is hereby given by the Florida Public Service Commission (Commission) that the action discussed herein is preliminary in nature and will become final unless a person whose interests are substantially affected files a petition for a formal proceeding, pursuant to Rule 25-22.029, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.).

Background

On August 4, 2026, Frontier Communications of the South, LLC (Frontier or Company) filed a petition with this Commission for relinquishment of its Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) designation for its service areas in Florida, effective November 1, 2026. Frontier is an incumbent local exchange carrier (ILEC) in Florida. On October 14, 1997, this Commission designated Frontier as an ETC in its ILEC service territory pursuant to 47 U.S.C. 214 (e)(2) and Section 364.10(2), Florida Statutes (F.S.) (1997).¹ An ETC designation is a requirement for telecommunications carriers to receive funding support from the federal Universal Service Fund for the Lifeline and High-Cost programs. The Lifeline program enables low-income households

¹ Order No. PSC-97-1262-FOF-TP issued October 14, 1997, in Docket No. 970644-TP, *In re: Establishment of eligible telecommunications carriers pursuant to Section 214(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996*, and Docket No. 970744-TP, *In Re: Implementation of changes in the Federal Lifeline Assistance Plan currently provided by telecommunications carriers of last resort*.

to obtain and maintain basic telephone and broadband services by offering qualifying households a discount on monthly bills. The High-Cost program helps carriers provide voice and broadband service in remote and underserved communities.

Frontier is relinquishing its ETC designation because the underlying purpose of the designation - to enable the receipt of high-cost universal service support - no longer exists for Frontier. Frontier has not received any high-cost universal service support since December 2021, when the FCC's Connect America Fund (CAF) program ended and was replaced by the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF). In the 2020 RDOF auction, the FCC awarded all high-cost support for RDOF-eligible census blocks in Frontier's service area to other providers.

Additionally, there has been a significant decline in the number of Frontier Lifeline customers. Frontier currently has only four Lifeline customers. Consistent with the national trend, the vast majority of Lifeline-supported households in Florida have chosen to obtain Lifeline service from one of the many mobile wireless ETCs that have been designated by the Commission or the FCC.²

We are vested with jurisdiction in this matter, pursuant to Section 364.10, Florida Statutes, 47 U.S.C. §214(e)(4), and 47 C.F.R. §54.205.

Decision

An ETC may relinquish its ETC designation pursuant to 47 C.F.R. §54.205(a), which provides that:

A state commission shall permit an eligible telecommunications carrier to relinquish its designation as such a carrier in any area served by more than one eligible telecommunications carrier. An eligible telecommunications carrier that seeks to relinquish its eligible telecommunications carrier designation for an area served by more than one eligible telecommunications carrier shall give advance notice to the state commission of such relinquishment.

In approving a relinquishment, state commissions must require the remaining ETCs to ensure that existing customers will continue to be served. 47 C.F.R. §54.205(b), provides that:

Prior to permitting a telecommunications carrier designated as an eligible telecommunications carrier to cease providing universal service in an area served by more than one eligible telecommunications carrier, the state commission shall require the remaining eligible telecommunications carrier or carriers to ensure that all customers served by the relinquishing carrier will continue to be served, and shall require sufficient notice to permit the purchase or construction of adequate facilities by any remaining eligible telecommunications carrier. The state commission shall establish a time, not to exceed one year after the state

² See Florida Public Service Commission, Florida Lifeline Assistance, December 2025, at 14 ("As of June 2025, wireless ETCs received approximately 99.4 percent of all Lifeline disbursements from USAC in Florida."). <https://www.floridapsc.com/pscfiles/website-files/PDF/Publications/Reports/Telecommunication/LifelineReport/2025.pdf>

commission approves such relinquishment under this section, within which such purchase or construction shall be completed.

Frontier identified in its petition all of the designated ETCs currently serving its service territory. Our staff sent a data request to each ETC in Frontier's service area to verify the ETC designation of the company and to confirm it is providing service in the wire centers identified by Frontier. Our staff compared the responses to ensure that customers in the relinquished area would continue to have Lifeline service available. We have confirmed that customers in Frontier's service territory will continue to have Lifeline service available from one or more ETCs (Attachment A).

Frontier currently has just four Lifeline customers. The small number of remaining Lifeline customers will be able to obtain Lifeline service from one of the many other ETCs operating in Frontier's service area, or they may instead elect to continue obtaining service from Frontier at standard rates, terms, and conditions. If a current Lifeline customer elects to continue obtaining service from Frontier, Frontier will remove the Lifeline discount as of the relinquishment effective date.

After this Commission issues an Order confirming relinquishment, Frontier shall notify its remaining Lifeline customers that they must select another ETC in order to continue receiving a Lifeline discount after the relinquishment effective date. Frontier shall use the same notice timeline that the Commission approved in the 2017 and 2021 AT&T Florida relinquishment orders. Specifically, at least 60 days prior to the relinquishment date, Frontier shall notify any remaining Lifeline customers by mail that (1) Frontier will no longer offer the federal Lifeline discount; and (2) if the customer does not choose another provider, Frontier shall continue to provide service at Frontier's standard prices (including applicable surcharges, fees and taxes) after the effective date of the relinquishment. Frontier shall also send each remaining affected Lifeline customer a second notice letter at least 15 days prior to the relinquishment date. All notices shall explain that Lifeline customers can obtain a list of other ETCs from the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), and that they may contact those other ETCs to discuss available Lifeline benefits. Accordingly, we hereby approve Frontier's petition for relinquishment of its ETC designation.

Based on the foregoing, it is

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that Frontier Communications of the South LLC's Petition for Relinquishment of Eligible Telecommunications Carrier designation in Florida is hereby approved. It is further

ORDERED that the provisions of this Order, issued as proposed agency action, shall become final and effective upon the issuance of a Consummating Order unless an appropriate petition, in the form provided by Rule 28-106.201, Florida Administrative Code, is received by the Commission Clerk, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850, by the close of business on the date set forth in the "Notice of Further Proceedings" attached hereto. It is further

ORDER NO. PSC-2026-0378-PAA-TL
DOCKET NO. 20260113-TL
PAGE 4

ORDERED that if no person whose substantial interests are affected by the proposed agency action files a protest within 21 days of the issuance of this Order, this docket shall be closed upon the issuance of a Consummating Order.

By ORDER of the Florida Public Service Commission this 26th day of October, 2026.



ADAM TEITZMAN
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.

AH

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 that is available under Section 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.

Mediation may be available on a case-by-case basis. If mediation is conducted, it does not affect a substantially interested person's right to a hearing.

The action proposed herein is preliminary in nature. Any person whose substantial interests are affected by the action proposed by this order may file a petition for a formal proceeding, in the form provided by Rule 28-106.201, Florida Administrative Code. This petition must be received by the Office of Commission Clerk, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850, by the close of business on November 16, 2026.

In the absence of such a petition, this order shall become final and effective upon the issuance of a Consummating Order.

Any objection or protest filed in this/these docket(s) before the issuance date of this order is considered abandoned unless it satisfies the foregoing conditions and is renewed within the specified protest period.

Docket No. 20260113-TL
Date: September 24, 2026

Attachment A

Relinquishment Area Wire Centers

State	CLI	Exchange Name	Confirmed ETCs Serving Census Block
FL	MOLNFLXA	Molino	Boomerang Wireless, LLC d/b/a EnTouch Wireless, Viasat Carrier Services, Inc., Assurance Wireless, i-wireless, LLC, DISH Wireless L.L.C.
FL	WLHLFLXA	Walnut Hill	Boomerang Wireless, LLC d/b/a EnTouch Wireless, Viasat Carrier Services, Inc., Assurance Wireless, i-wireless, LLC, DISH Wireless L.L.C.