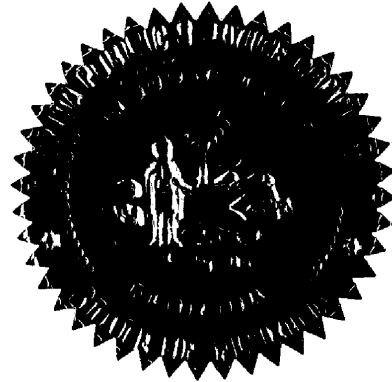


FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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3 PROPOSED STRATEGY REGARDING
4 FUTURE LIFELINE AND LINK-UP
INITIATIVES.



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13 PROCEEDINGS: INTERNAL AFFAIRS
AGENDA ITEM NO. 5

14 BEFORE: CHAIRMAN LISA POLAK EDGAR
15 COMMISSIONER J. TERRY DEASON
16 COMMISSIONER ISILIO ARRIAGA
17 COMMISSIONER MATTHEW M. CARTER, II
COMMISSIONER KATRINA J. TEW

18 DATE: Monday, February 27, 2006

19 PLACE: Betty Easley Conference Center
20 Room 148
4075 Esplanade Way
Tallahassee, Florida

21 REPORTED BY: LINDA BOLES, RPR, CCR
22 Official Hearings Reporter
23 FPSC Division of Commission Clerk and
Administrative Services
(850) 413-6734

1 PARTICIPATING:

2 BOB CASEY, BEV DEMELLO, CURTIS WILLIAMS AND CHERYL
3 BULECZA-BANKS, representing the Commission staff.

4 DR. MARK A. JAMISON, representing PURC.

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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2 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: I'll ask our staff to go ahead and
3 present Item 5 to us.

4 MR. CASEY: Good afternoon, Commissioners. Bob Casey
5 on behalf of Commission staff.

6 At the December 20th, 2005, Internal Affairs staff
7 presented the annual draft Lifeline and Link-up Report for your
8 approval. At that meeting staff conveyed to Commissioners that
9 it would analyze data collected from the simplified
10 certification initiative, along with findings from the recent
11 PURC study, and present recommendations to Commissioners for
12 future action.

13 Staff believes it is now time to take action to
14 develop a formal strategy to improve the success of the
15 Lifeline and Link-Up programs. Staff recommends that a
16 Commission or staff workshop be conducted immediately, or, in
17 lieu of a workshop, direct staff to meet with all interested
18 parties to develop ideas and input and subsequently present
19 recommendations to the Commissioners at an Internal Affairs or
20 Agenda Conference as soon as possible. And staff is available
21 for any questions you may have.

22 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Thank you, Mr. Casey.

23 Commissioners? Commissioner Arriaga.

24 COMMISSIONER ARRIAGA: Mr. Casey.

25 MR. CASEY: Yes, sir.

1 COMMISSIONER ARRIAGA: And at the same time Dr.
2 Jamison. We have been talking -- well, I have known about
3 Lifeline since about a year and a half ago when I first
4 intended to be a Commissioner, and from there on I just kept
5 looking and listening and studying the issue.

6 I have heard back and forth from you, the staff, from
7 the companies that everybody is doing everything that they can.
8 But time goes by and we don't see any real improvement. There
9 comes a point that I start feeling frustrated.

10 And, Dr. Jamison, even though you have come with a
11 lot of findings and given us some good ideas as to where we
12 should market and target these things, the real issue as to why
13 this isn't working nobody knows.

14 What are you intending to accomplish in the workshop
15 you're recommending? What is it you're going to do different
16 to what we have done so far that would make a difference?

17 MR. CASEY: This would be open to all parties,
18 interested parties, and that's basically the questions we're
19 going to ask. Why isn't your enrollment up? Why is it only
20 12 percent? We've confirmed now that both PURC and staff came
21 up with a 12 percent participation rate, and we need to know
22 why they can't up that. And we're going to flat out ask the
23 utilities, What can you do to increase enrollment? Is there a
24 barrier there that we need to bring down?

25 COMMISSIONER ARRIAGA: Isn't this the same kind of

1 questions we have been asking for the last year? I mean,
2 haven't you asked these questions to industry before?

3 MR. CASEY: We have asked that.

4 COMMISSIONER ARRIAGA: I have asked them myself and I
5 have no answer, and Dr. Jamison and I have spoken about it.
6 And what, what is different now?

7 MR. CASEY: Well, one of the big things is
8 Dr. Jamison's PURC study showing exactly why the
9 participation -- well, the participation rates are the same as
10 staff's, and why he believes that participation is low, and
11 should we target those things that he's saying, would that
12 increase -- I'm sorry.

13 DR. JAMISON: If I could chime in a bit.

14 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Dr. Jamison, please.

15 DR. JAMISON: The -- you know, from what we were able
16 to determine, it was generally a lack of awareness on people's
17 parts. They just simply didn't know about the program. There
18 are a few that once they know about it won't participate, but
19 for the most part they just don't know. And understanding from
20 the research results that it's often times the social agencies
21 and social workers who are the most effective people for
22 informing the low income households, the eligible households
23 about the program, it might, you might consider for the
24 workshop talking about ways that they might become more
25 informed, more effective, participate to a greater extent in

1 doing that marketing.

2 COMMISSIONER ARRIAGA: May I follow up?

3 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Commissioner Arriaga.

4 COMMISSIONER ARRIAGA: Thank you. During the PURC
5 conference, I think it was Dr. Mayo who made a comment that one
6 of the reasons people will reject Lifeline assistance is
7 because they couldn't have it while at the same time having
8 broadband or other kind of service like call forwarding or
9 something like that. I think in Dr. Mayo's study also it was
10 indicated that the President of the United States has said that
11 his goal is to have broadband accessible to everybody, like a
12 universal service. Is there a dichotomy, is there a difference
13 between having Lifeline and having broadband? Is broadband a
14 luxury or something that the United States is looking forward
15 to accomplish as a universal service?

16 DR. JAMISON: That's a good question, and I don't
17 have the answer to that. I mean, that's a political question,
18 whether or not we want to pursue that as a country.

19 What Dr. Mayo's study was showing was that if a
20 person is restricted from subscribing to call forwarding, call
21 waiting, some other type of vertical service if they took
22 Lifeline, then they were much less likely to take the Lifeline.
23 And from our study we didn't find that to be an issue for
24 Florida. It is an issue nationwide, but it didn't appear to be
25 an issue for Florida.

1 COMMISSIONER ARRIAGA: Thank you, ma'am.

2 COMMISSIONER CARTER: Madam Chairman.

3 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Commissioner Carter.

4 COMMISSIONER CARTER: I was looking at, Dr. Jamison,
5 looking at your presentation and listening too. And in the
6 context of the credibility factor, I'm using my own words to
7 interpret what I thought you said, is that it has a tremendous
8 impact on whether or not people participate. And that is to
9 say the source from where the people get the information about
10 the Lifeline, and I think you said it was social service
11 agencies. That's correct.

12 Have you been able to ascertain or either anecdotally
13 or in a substantive manner whether or not the social service
14 agencies have done any type of marketing to the service groups
15 or these individuals that they service about the information
16 about Lifeline, or is it just one of those things that they
17 just happened to mention? It's like my wife when she goes
18 shopping. On the way out the door she says, well, I better buy
19 him something since I spent a lot of money. Do you think it's
20 kind of important?

21 DR. JAMISON: Well, that's a good question. And your
22 staff could probably give you a lot more details on it than I
23 can. So let me just kind of clarify what we've found in our
24 research, and then maybe I should defer to them on the rest of
25 it.

1 The research did show us that the participation of
2 the social agencies, the social workers, the telecommunications
3 companies, et cetera, in marketing was really very important.
4 We didn't know that that was going to be the finding before we
5 engaged in the research, so we did not get into any of the
6 details of how they might do that work or to what extent
7 they're really involved. So that -- so in December when we
8 found out, okay, this is the result of the research, we now
9 concluded, okay, the next step is to get into the details, but
10 we hadn't had a chance to do that yet.

11 COMMISSIONER CARTER: Madam Chair.

12 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Commissioner Carter.

13 COMMISSIONER CARTER: Follow-up with staff, same
14 question. I mean, it seems to me that the predominant driving
15 force in the participation in Lifeline happens to be these
16 social service agencies.

17 Have you been able to ascertain whether or not
18 there's been any kind of a systemic marketing process with
19 these agencies as they go about with the Lifeline program to
20 their service constituents?

21 MR. CASEY: I would defer to Mr. Williams over here,
22 our expert in Lifeline, and also Ms. DeMello.

23 MR. WILLIAMS: Well, DCF, as a part of their process
24 of enrolling their clients for services such as food stamps and
25 Medicaid, they've actually incorporated the Lifeline program as

1 a part of that process. So it's not just -- you're correct,
2 Commissioner. It's a marketing effort, but it's also
3 incorporated in their process of enrolling customers.

4 MS. DeMELLO: And, Commissioner, this is Bev DeMello.
5 Another group that's been very helpful with us is the United
6 Way Agencies of Florida. And they have -- we've worked with
7 them to try to get the Lifeline brochures into their clients'
8 hands. And also the Florida Association for Community Action
9 Agencies. And I think this is a good way to do grass-roots
10 level and kind of Train the Trainer, and they've been very
11 receptive to that kind of information because they're wanting
12 to help their clients out, too.

13 COMMISSIONER CARTER: Madam Chairman.

14 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Commissioner Carter.

15 COMMISSIONER CARTER: Did I read something or did I
16 ask you about this, Ms. DeMello, about the school lunch
17 program? Did you mention that to me or were we talking about
18 the different kind of programs that can be utilized in the same
19 level of the Children and Families program? I mean, there's --
20 in places like Gadsden County, for an example, you have a
21 disproportionate percentage of the student population there on
22 school lunch, probably 80, 90 percent of them. And I remember
23 saying something about the school lunch program with the
24 Department of Education. Am I -- did we talk about that?

25 MS. DeMELLO: I'm not sure you and I talked about

1 that. But I think -- I mean, I know the school lunch and
2 certainly the back to school program that you've heard a lot
3 about, they have tried to get brochures out into the hands of
4 the, of the schools. And BellSouth and Sprint and Verizon were
5 very involved in getting, I think it was 2.6 million brochures
6 out to the school children.

7 But, Curtis, did you have anything to add on that?

8 MR. WILLIAMS: Well, I'll add, Commissioner, that
9 that's another effort related to more on the social side that
10 we think has been effective and is an area that deserves to be
11 looked at further.

12 As we noted in the 2005 Lifeline report, as we
13 presented in that report, we were encouraged by some of the
14 numbers that resulted from the school lunch effort during 2005.

15 COMMISSIONER CARTER: Madam Chairman, the only thing
16 I was trying to get at is that maybe somehow or another we need
17 to get down to the bottom line, you know. When you say social
18 service agencies, that can be anything. That's a morass. But,
19 I mean, you know, can we get down to see what programs are
20 working, what programs are not working, and maybe see if an
21 additional impetus or marketing, we could increase the efforts
22 there? I'm just trying to get there. Because this is an
23 important program and the people that are eligible for this
24 program are in need of the program, and we really want to make
25 sure that people take advantage of the program.

1 Did you guys, were you able to determine what, what
2 percentage -- the greatest percentage, it says social service
3 agencies, but do we say it's from Children and Families, is it
4 Department of Education, is it -- what?

5 MS. BANKS: I don't believe -- this is Cheryl Banks.
6 I don't believe we have that kind of breakdown as of yet. The
7 companies have been trying to look at different ways that
8 perhaps if they can code like the school lunch application that
9 went in the packet and are looking at something, those were the
10 kind of items we wanted to discuss at the workshop to be able
11 to see -- so that we can target the money that they spend in
12 areas that really provide the most benefit.

13 COMMISSIONER CARTER: Madam Chairman, one last
14 question.

15 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Commissioner Carter.

16 COMMISSIONER CARTER: Thank you for your indulgence,
17 Madam Chairman.

18 Do we have enough credible people on the ground in
19 these respective communities marketing Lifeline? Anybody can
20 answer that. Because Dr. Jamison said credibility is a
21 significant factor. Do we have enough -- I know that I heard
22 someone say there were a number of people out there in
23 different communities with this effort. Do we have enough
24 people on the ground out there doing this? I mean getting the
25 word out to these various and sundry communities with

1 credibility.

2 MS. DeMELLO: Uh-huh. Well, I think that we could
3 probably -- I think the United Way is a very trustworthy
4 agency. They work a lot with the clients who need this kind of
5 service. I think the Florida Action Agencies are very good.
6 But we probably need to -- because one of the things that keeps
7 coming up, and, Dr. Jamison, you mentioned it, is awareness.
8 And the item that we'll be getting to in the next internal -- I
9 mean, the Lifeline item, we have found on the national level
10 the people that are responding to Lifeline across America
11 information that we're going to be talking about, it's still
12 awareness. And some of the groups that we've heard from are
13 like the National Social Service Agencies. So maybe what we
14 need to do is, is have a framework of these agencies kind of
15 like what you're saying, and then, you know, try to keep
16 following up, are y'all doing the Train the Trainer programs,
17 and that kind of thing.

18 MS. BANKS: We -- excuse me.

19 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Ms. Banks.

20 MS. BANKS: One thing that they -- that I have been
21 told has been very effective is if they go into, say, a church
22 community, if there's someone in the church that actually is
23 taking Lifeline service and they're the ones who are speaking,
24 there's a lot more credibility with that person and people tend
25 to believe them as opposed to some representative from the

1 utility who's talking about the program. There's still an
2 unease there. And those programs they've tried to use more and
3 more of. Ava Parker's group has tried to do that: Find
4 someone when they go into the community who the people know and
5 trust or they know their neighbor has been more helpful.

6 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Commissioner Carter, just a comment.
7 It's my understanding that the industry has been trying a
8 number of programs to try to reach out just in the way that
9 you're asking about and that you're suggesting. And I do note
10 that we have representatives here if there are specific
11 questions about specific efforts.

12 I would also note that the item before us is to have
13 a workshop to go into those things in depth and breadth. And I
14 know that we are all interested in doing that.

15 I'll also share -- let's see. I had two other
16 comments. One, my understanding -- your first comment about
17 targeting the school lunch program. As the mother of two
18 children in the public school system and knowing all of the
19 material that comes, I think that is a great way to get the
20 word out to people, to families, to parents about services that
21 are out there. And I'm not sure what the efforts will be to
22 continue that in the next few years, but I think that's
23 certainly a mechanism to continue to look at.

24 And I also note that tomorrow afternoon I'm going to
25 be participating in a meeting that the Governor's Office has

1 organized of industry representatives to brief the agency heads
2 at the Secretary level on Lifeline and the program, and to once
3 again ask for their assistance and for that to filter down.
4 That's something that we've done in the past. But every so
5 often we think that that's a good way to engage and to share
6 information. And, again, the Governor's Office has organized
7 that tomorrow for us to have that discussion.

8 Dr. Jamison.

9 DR. JAMISON: Yes. To Commissioner Carter's question
10 about what social programs. From the data we were able to
11 determine the three programs that have the most eligible
12 households in them tend to be the supplemental security income,
13 the food stamps and the Medicaid. Those tend to have more
14 eligible households in them than any of the other programs.

15 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Commissioner Tew.

16 COMMISSIONER TEW: I had a couple of other ideas I
17 wanted to throw out. Maybe you can consider it when you take
18 these up to the workshop.

19 Because of the earlier discussion by Commissioner
20 Carter and the Chairman about other agencies getting involved,
21 I just wanted to raise the idea again of MOUs. And I know
22 Mr. Williams will probably have something to add on this
23 because I think we have done an MOU in the past with one sister
24 agency on this. But I don't know how, you know, effective that
25 would be, but it might be another way to raise some awareness

1 with some other agencies to have MOUs with other agencies in
2 addition to that one.

3 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Before you respond, if I may,
4 Commissioner Tew. One of the things that I've asked our
5 Executive Director's office to do, I made the request in the
6 last few weeks, so I know that it's ongoing and that they will
7 be reporting back to us, is to review all of the MOU or MOAs
8 that this agency has with other agencies and to give us an
9 analysis as to if there are any that are out of date, need to
10 be updated, if there are any that are just, quite frankly, out
11 of date and no longer needed, if there is a gap there, and
12 there again if that is a mechanism that we can use to work with
13 other organizations. So we will be getting some further
14 information on that.

15 Do you have anything to add?

16 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, ma'am, Commissioner Tew, to
17 answer your question and to follow up with you, Chairman Edgar.
18 There was or there is an MOU that, that was signed by the
19 Commission and several agencies. I think the Department of
20 Labor at the time. And that, that particular MOU needs to be
21 updated. Staff has already updated the MOU or it's in the
22 process of being updated, adding several agencies and adding
23 more specific information and detail in terms of what we would
24 like to work with those agencies on in enhancing that MOU and
25 incorporating it in, in our current efforts.

1 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: And just to clarify that. The
2 review that I had asked for would be all the MOUs. So those
3 that deal with this issue, but other, other issues as well.

4 MS. BANKS: You'll be seeing that relatively soon.

5 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Thank you.

6 Commissioner Arriaga.

7 COMMISSIONER ARRIAGA: Just to share with
8 Commissioner Carter a little bit of his concerns and
9 frustration because I feel like you. I mean, there's just no
10 answer.

11 I have heard that we're doing A, B, C, D and E. All
12 the ideas that we have spoken about, we have been talking about
13 the same ideas for a year. And I have just heard from
14 Dr. Jamison that even though we're doing A, B, C, D and E and
15 maybe F, G and H, awareness is still a problem. What that
16 leads me to think is that what we're doing may not be working.
17 So maybe during the workshop or whatever we're going to do we
18 should review what is it we're doing to see if we're doing it
19 right. And no reflection on the effectiveness of staff. It's
20 ourselves, we, staff, Commission, what is it that we're doing
21 that doesn't work? Because MOUs, understanding with the social
22 service agencies, communications, conversations with industry,
23 everything in the book we have tried, and the rate of
24 acceptance is 12 percent. Something is not working and we need
25 to find out.

1 MR. CASEY: And that's the exact reason why we want
2 to hold a workshop, everything that's been discussed today, and
3 bring it all out open on the table.

4 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Commissioner Tew, you had a
5 follow-up, I think.

6 COMMISSIONER TEW: I did. I had another question for
7 staff.

8 How long has it been since we've looked at how other
9 states perform their Lifeline functions? Because I was
10 noticing on Dr. Jamison's slide number 27, it shows Lifeline
11 participation rates by state. And it may be worthwhile looking
12 into some -- how other states, maybe with the exception of
13 California --

14 MR. CASEY: We agree.

15 COMMISSIONER TEW: -- at how other states are doing
16 it.

17 MR. CASEY: We constantly monitor what other states
18 are doing. We -- there's some legislation up on the hill right
19 now for automatic enrollment, and we wanted to see how many
20 states have automatic enrollment and whether it's been
21 successful or not. But we constantly monitor what other states
22 are doing.

23 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Commissioner Deason.

24 COMMISSIONER DEASON: Yes, Madam Chairman, I have a
25 question for staff and one for Dr. Jamison, and I'll start with

1 Dr. Jamison.

2 First of all, I want to say I appreciate the very
3 fine work that has been done, and it's, it's good that we can
4 finally feel comfortable that our numbers concerning
5 participation are fairly accurate. I know that there was,
6 before there was some uncertainty as to actually the number of
7 eligible folks out there and trying to determine participation
8 levels, and we appreciate that.

9 Also, I know there's some recurring things in the
10 report and we've been talking about a lot of those. A lack of,
11 of understanding or that the lack of -- I won't say lack of
12 outreach -- but there still is, there's a certain amount of
13 eligible participants or folks that would be eligible who just
14 are not aware. I guess a lack of awareness problem.

15 But one of the other things that I know that you
16 presented in your report was that there was a high correlation
17 between participation and the, the prices of telephone service.
18 And so the question that I have is do you have -- at this
19 point, based upon the information that you have, do you have
20 any feel for the relatively low participation rates being
21 correlated to the relatively low prices of basic telephone
22 service in Florida?

23 DR. JAMISON: We, we looked at that issue with our
24 nationwide study, and we found that for Florida, based upon the
25 statistical model we developed, that Florida's participation

1 rate was exactly where we predicted a state to be, given our
2 demographics, local telephone prices, et cetera. So I guess in
3 a sense the answer is yes.

4 Now there are other factors that are involved, but
5 the low local telephone prices in Florida are playing in and
6 being a factor.

7 COMMISSIONER DEASON: Let me ask you this then.
8 We're, we're going -- there is -- we're going to see some
9 changes over a period of time in basic local telephone rates
10 with rate rebalancing. Do -- based upon your economic
11 analysis, would you think that that factor, everything else
12 being held constant, would result in higher participation over
13 the transition period of that rate rebalancing period?

14 DR. JAMISON: Yes, it would. The price of local
15 telephone service showed to be, showed up to be economically
16 significant, meaning that if you changed the price of local
17 telephone service, you'd get a large change in the
18 participation in Lifeline. So we would expect people to
19 respond by signing up for more Lifeline.

20 COMMISSIONER DEASON: Is that something that we can
21 monitor or is your study over and this is it for you, or is
22 this something the Commission can do?

23 DR. JAMISON: Yes. It's fairly simple to keep, to
24 monitor and continue to look at. So I'd be glad to continue to
25 work with staff with this model and update it with new data, et

1 cetera. That's, that's fine.

2 COMMISSIONER DEASON: And then the question I have
3 for staff, you heard Mr. Renard indicate that his organization
4 feels that there is a service to society as a whole, and
5 particularly perhaps to the customers or potential customers
6 that would be served by Lifeline, that those needs may be being
7 met currently through public phones, and that he feels like
8 there should be some consideration given to utilizing some
9 Lifeline support for that particular service. Is that
10 something that we can address in the workshop or do we need
11 more time to address that?

12 MR. CASEY: Certainly everything is open at the
13 workshop, everything is on the table. I don't believe that we
14 can do anything. That would have to be done by the FCC.

15 COMMISSIONER DEASON: I understand that it has to be
16 FCC. But if we get information that shows that at least in
17 Florida that we think it would be helpful to, to citizens who
18 utilize that service to have some support there so that, if
19 nothing else, to maybe diminish the number of phones that are
20 being lost, pay telephones that are being lost that are serving
21 the communities. If we give some information, does staff feel
22 like that that would be helpful in petitioning the FCC in some
23 form or another to have some consideration for Florida in that
24 regard?

25 MR. CASEY: We sure would like to look at that, yes,

1 sir.

2 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Commissioner Carter.

3 COMMISSIONER CARTER: Madam Chairman, I think this
4 was prior to my effective date on the Commission, but I
5 remember seeing a report that was due to the Governor and I
6 believe it would be to the Speaker and the Senate President
7 from our staff where it showed that there was a spike in
8 signing up to Lifeline. I remember that report, and it said
9 that there were some commercials or advertisements or
10 something. And then I was kind of wondering aloud was there,
11 is there some correlation in terms of when Dr. Jamison did his
12 report, I mean, was there static or did you pick up this spike
13 or is there some kind of -- I'm just trying to say what's
14 working -- I mean, not that 15 percent would be working, but
15 what's working based upon that? Do you have the report before
16 you, Ms. DeMello?

17 MS. DeMELLO: Yes, I do.

18 COMMISSIONER CARTER: I think it was in the latter
19 part of the year.

20 MS. DeMELLO: I think you might be referring to the
21 back to school program when they did some public service
22 announcements and some media events surrounding that.

23 COMMISSIONER CARTER: Yes.

24 MS. DeMELLO: And, Mr. Williams, you might want to
25 comment on that. But they did have, I think, a spike in the --

1 COMMISSIONER CARTER: Yeah. There was a chart in
2 there, I remember.

3 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes. There's a chart, Commissioner,
4 that shows a significant increase in the number of new Lifeline
5 subscribers. Not -- the chart focused on not the overall
6 number of Lifeline participants, but the actual increase in the
7 number of customers for that particular time period.

8 And in the report we did make reference to the school
9 lunch program and also the Connect Florida event where there
10 were, there was significant media coverage associated with,
11 with a Connect Florida outreach event.

12 COMMISSIONER CARTER: That was only done once though
13 during that year, if my memory serves me correctly; right?

14 MR. WILLIAMS: Well, the school lunch, the back to
15 school effort was, you know, it was consistent with the time
16 period where students actually went back to school. So that
17 was a one-time event.

18 The actual media event, and, Bev, you can help me out
19 on this, but we've had the community outreach event associated
20 with the Connect Florida effort throughout the year, but this
21 particular event had significant media coverage.

22 MS. DeMELLO: Uh-huh. It was in Miami and I think in
23 South Florida.

24 COMMISSIONER CARTER: Madam Chairman, just, if I may,
25 just one statement. And I think that the reason that

1 Commissioner Tew, Commissioner Arriaga and I are speaking about
2 this issue is as we went before the Joint Committee of the
3 Senate and the House, that was one of the most significant
4 issues that the members were concerned about is the lack of
5 participation in Lifeline. So this is not just an esoteric
6 issue to us, neither that it is to the two of you. And so what
7 we're trying to do is that obviously we see something that's
8 working. Maybe we need to do more of that something that's
9 working, and we've got to do something more.

10 Now you said that you had a spike in the new people
11 signing up. And that's what we're after, right, new people to
12 sign up. So we need to do something more.

13 Thank you, Madam Chairman.

14 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Thank you, Commissioner Carter.

15 One thing that I find hard for just me personally to
16 get my mind around and my arms around this program is because
17 it is, it is so diffuse. Perhaps, you know, the industry has a
18 responsibility and a role. We certainly, I think, have a role
19 to play. OPC has a statutory role. We -- the -- some of those
20 other social service agencies are named in statute and has a
21 role. So it's trying to have that big tent of participation
22 and marketing, but yet responsibility does not reside in any
23 one place, and sometimes that can be a hindrance, I think, with
24 a program. So --

25 COMMISSIONER DEASON: Madam Chairman, one other

1 comment.

2 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Commissioner Deason.

3 COMMISSIONER DEASON: Thank you. I believe it's
4 important that we get full utilization out of the Lifeline
5 program, so please don't, what I'm about to say, don't be taken
6 in the wrong light. But at the same time I see Dr. Jamison's
7 report, and there is a, there's a high degree of subscribership
8 even in the, the population that is eligible for Lifeline who
9 still choose not to utilize Lifeline. We still have high
10 penetration rates. So that's a tremendous plus. That's a good
11 thing.

12 I would not want the goal simply to be sign up new
13 customers for Lifeline. Our goal really should be let's
14 utilize Lifeline resources to get people on the network that
15 are not currently on the network and use Lifeline resources to
16 prevent people that would otherwise drop off the network as
17 opposed to just getting high numbers to say we've got a lot of
18 people signed up. I think we need to refine the goal, and I
19 think the goal should be, as I just stated, those that are not
20 on the system now that would otherwise subscribe, I think that
21 is very important. And for those customers who are, who are
22 right on the edge and may at some future point have to
23 disconnect service and maybe Lifeline would prevent that, I
24 think that's really where we need to try to utilize these
25 resources.

1 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Thank you, Commissioner Deason. I
2 know in my recent conversations with staff one of the questions
3 I've asked is, "What is the goal?" And I always like to,
4 again, just personally try to take a step back and say what is
5 it that we're trying to accomplish? And if I hear you, it's to
6 remember that it's not just numbers, but there is a public
7 policy goal that this program was created and exists to try to
8 accomplish, and that's to help people who desire a service,
9 need a service that may not otherwise be able to have it or may
10 be hindered in having that service due to financial or other,
11 other reasoning. So I think that broader public policy goal is
12 something that we would want to always keep in mind and keep in
13 mind as we go to the workshop and on to the next steps.

14 Commissioners, we do have a recommendation before us
15 from our staff to move to a workshop to discuss these issues in
16 more detail. Are there thoughts about that or are we ready to
17 take up the recommendation?

18 COMMISSIONER DEASON: I'm ready to move forward with
19 the recommendation.

20 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Commissioner Deason.

21 COMMISSIONER DEASON: Obviously I agree with staff's
22 recommendation that we need to go to a workshop and that we
23 need to -- I guess I'll be putting words in staff's mouth, but
24 it's like everything is on the table and we need to have a very
25 comprehensive, thorough review and try to get ideas from any

1 and everyone and try to see what can be done to improve it, and
2 I think a workshop is the correct vehicle to, to get us there.

3 So I, I would move approval of staff's
4 recommendation.

5 COMMISSIONER ARRIAGA: Second.

6 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Okay. I have a motion and a second.
7 And I think we may be getting a question for clarification from
8 our staff. Mr. Casey.

9 MR. CASEY: Yes. Whether you would prefer a
10 Commission workshop or staff workshop.

11 COMMISSIONER DEASON: Well, you know, that's -- I
12 would like to attend personally, I guess, if that's -- if I
13 have, you know, discretion one way or the other. And maybe if
14 it's just noticed that way, that would allow that. I know -- I
15 think it's important enough that I know, speaking for myself, I
16 would like to attend the workshop.

17 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Commissioner Carter.

18 COMMISSIONER CARTER: I have a definite opinion about
19 that. I think that, you know, the buck stops here. We need to
20 be here. It's to be a Commissioner workshop. We made
21 representations to the Joint Committee and we made
22 representations to the Governor, and we are standing here on
23 behalf of the people of the State of Florida, so we need --
24 this is significant. So the buck stops here. This should be a
25 workshop that we're in attendance to and participating.

1 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: And to my left, comments or
2 thoughts?

3 COMMISSIONER ARRIAGA: I agree for a commission
4 workshop.

5 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Okay. Then it -- again, not to put
6 words, so help me with my wording here to my colleagues, but to
7 answer your question, Mr. Casey, I think that we would like to
8 have it be noticed as a Commissioners may participate, and
9 would ask that you check with each of our offices on dates and
10 scheduling before that date is set.

11 Commissioner Deason, is that in keeping with the
12 motion on the table?

13 COMMISSIONER DEASON: Yes, Madam Chairman.

14 CHAIRMAN EDGAR: Okay. We have a motion and a
15 second. All in favor, say aye.

16 (Unanimous affirmative vote.)

17 Thank you. And we show Item 5 approved.

18 (Internal Affairs Agenda Item 5 concluded.)
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1 STATE OF FLORIDA)
 :
2 COUNTY OF LEON) CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

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4 I, LINDA BOLES, RPR, CRR, Official Commission
Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing proceeding was
5 heard at the time and place herein stated.


6 IT IS FURTHER CERTIFIED that I stenographically
reported the said proceedings; that the same has been
7 transcribed under my direct supervision; and that this
transcript constitutes a true transcription of my notes of said
8 proceedings.

9 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative, employee,
attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor am I a relative
10 or employee of any of the parties' attorneys or counsel
connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in
11 the action.

12 DATED THIS 2ND DAY OF MARCH, 2006.

13

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LINDA BOLES, RPR, CRR
FPSC Official Commission Reporter
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