

Jeffrey Hatch
1704 Millcreek Way
Salt Lake City, UT 84106

April 19, 2010

Chairman Ted Boyer
Commissioner Richard M. Campbell
Commissioner Ron Allen
Utah Public Service Commission
Heber M. Wells Building
160 East 300 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Dear Commissioners:

The Utah Public Service Commission is considering an application to expand Lifeline, a public assistance program enacted and funded by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that will provide low-income seniors and low-income families who meet specific eligibility standards access to free telephone service. It is my understanding that TracFone, a leading national wireless provider, has applied for Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) status for the purpose of offering Lifeline services to low-income households in the State of Utah.

In 2009 only twenty-one percent (29,982 households) of the estimated 145,986 low-income households in Utah had Lifeline service. The low penetration rate is due in part to the fact that existing Telecommunications Carriers' do not incorporate marketing for the Lifeline program in their business model, and as a consequence the majority of Utah's low-income population do not know that the program exists.

The ongoing economic recession has created enormous financial burdens on Utah families, and has disproportionately impacted low-income seniors and families in Utah who are often forced to give up telephone service that had served as both a safety lifeline and a critical link to seeking and maintaining employment status. The Lifeline program, that is entirely funded by the FCC administered Universal Service Fund, provides access to cell phones that studies have clearly demonstrated can significantly boost the earning potential of low-income families, and are a critical component of personal safety and access to emergency services.

I am not personally acquainted with the TracFone company, but am 100% behind expanding service to the target population they propose to serve with their "SafeLink" program. Should you determine they meet your fiscal and operating expectations, I encourage you to support their proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Hatch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeffrey Hatch