

**BEFORE THE
STATE OF UTAH
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

Petition of TruConnect Communications, Inc.)
for Designation as an Eligible) Docket No. 24-2646-01
Telecommunications Carrier in the State of)
Utah)
_____)

TruConnect Communications, Inc. (“TruConnect”), by its undersigned counsel,
respectfully submits the attached direct testimony of Danielle Perry in support of its Petition for
Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier.

Respectfully submitted,



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* Admitted to the D.C. Bar under D.C. App. R. 46-A (Emergency Examination Waiver) and supervised by active D.C. Bar Members.

1 **Q: PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME, OCCUPATION AND BUSINESS ADDRESS.**

2 **A:** My name is Danielle Perry. I am the Chief Compliance Officer of TruConnect
3 Communications, Inc. (“TruConnect” or “Company”), the Petitioner in this matter. My
4 business address is 1149 South Hill Street, Suite H-3 400, Los Angeles, California 90015.

5 **Q: WHAT ARE YOUR GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS CHIEF COMPLIANCE**
6 **OFFICER FOR TRUCONNECT?**

7 **A:** As Chief Compliance Officer for TruConnect, I am ultimately responsible for and
8 oversee all regulatory and compliance related aspects of the business. I am also
9 ultimately responsible for the Company’s Lifeline services and for ensuring compliance
10 and execution of TruConnect’s duties as a service provider within the federal Lifeline
11 Program.

12 **Q: PLEASE PROVIDE A SUMMARY OF YOUR WORK HISTORY IN THE**
13 **TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY.**

14 **A:** I have over 20 years of experience in the telecommunications industry, with 15 of those
15 years being focused on the Lifeline program. I have held senior management positions
16 on 20 both operations and technology teams, in addition to working closely with state and
17 federal agencies on numerous integration projects. Prior to working with TruConnect, I
18 served as the Chief Information Officer at Blue Jay Wireless.

19 **Q: WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR TESTIMONY?**

20 **A:** I am providing this testimony in support of TruConnect’s petition for designation as an
21 eligible telecommunications carrier (“ETC”) throughout the State of Utah (“Petition”)
22 filed in this docket. The purpose of my testimony, combined with the Petition, is to

1 demonstrate to the Utah Public Service Commission (“Commission”) that TruConnect
2 meets the federal and state legal requirements for designation as an ETC.

3 **Q: PLEASE DESCRIBE TRUCONNECT AND THE SERVICES IT PROVIDES.**

4 **A:** TruConnect is a Delaware corporation with its principal office located at 1149 S. Hill
5 Street, Suite H-400, Los Angeles, California 90015. TruConnect is authorized to do
6 business in Utah. TruConnect Communications, Inc., formerly Telscape
7 Communications, Inc., is a subsidiary of TSC Acquisition Corporation (“TSC”). TSC
8 also owns Sage Telecom Communications, LLC d/b/a TruConnect (“Sage d/b/a
9 TruConnect”), formerly known as Sage Telecom, Inc. before a corporate restructuring in
10 2012. The owners of TSC separately own TruConnect Mobile, LLC, which sells mobile
11 hotspot devices and low-cost monthly data plans, as well as TruConnect Technologies,
12 LLC, a mobile data analytics company that develops data intelligence products and
13 services for wireless carriers, cable operators, and content providers.

14 TruConnect provides prepaid wireless telecommunications services to consumers
15 by using the underlying wireless networks of facilities-based providers, T-Mobile USA,
16 Inc. (“T-Mobile”) and Verizon Wireless (“Verizon”) (collectively, “Underlying Carriers”)
17 on a wholesale basis to offer nationwide service. TruConnect is currently designated and
18 operating as a wireless ETC in Alabama, California, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Rhode
19 Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Wyoming, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. TruConnect
20 is also authorized by the FCC and the Universal Service Administrative Company
21 (“USAC”) to participate in the Affordable Connectivity Program (“ACP”) throughout the
22 United States, including Utah.

1 **Q: WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF TRUCONNECT’S PETITION FOR DESIGNATION**
2 **AS AN ETC?**

3 **A:** TruConnect seeks ETC designation solely to provide Lifeline service to qualifying Utah
4 consumers; it will not (and is not eligible to) seek access to funds from the federal
5 Universal Service Fund (“USF”) for the purpose of participating in the Link-Up program
6 or providing service to high cost areas. TruConnect will seek universal service support
7 for Lifeline service from the federal USF and the Utah USF.

8 **Q: DOES TRUCONNECT MEET THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS TO BE**
9 **DESIGNATED AS AN ETC?**

10 **A:** Yes. As described in TruConnect’s Petition and my testimony, TruConnect meets the
11 federal and state legal requirements to be designated as an ETC by the Commission
12 pursuant to Section 214(e) of the Communications Act (47 U.S.C. § 214(e)), Federal
13 Communications Commission (“FCC”) Rules (47 C.F.R. Part 54), Section 54-8b-15 of
14 the Utah Code Annotated (Utah Code Ann. § 54-8b-15), and the Commission’s rules
15 (Utah Admin. Code R746-8-403).

16 Section 254(e) of the Act provides that, “only an eligible telecommunications
17 carrier designated under section 214(e) shall be eligible to receive specific federal
18 universal service support.” Section 214(e)(1) of the Communications Act and Section
19 54.201(d) of the FCC’s Rules provide that applicants for ETC designation must be
20 common carriers that shall, throughout the designated service area, offer all of the
21 services supported by universal service, either using their own facilities or a combination
22 of their own facilities and the resale of another carrier’s services, except where the FCC
23 has forborne from the “own facilities” requirement. Applicants also must commit to

1 advertise the availability and rates of such services. TruConnect satisfies each of the
2 above-listed requirements.

3 **Q: IS TRUCONNECT A COMMON CARRIER?**

4 **A:** Yes. TruConnect operates as a common carrier as defined in 47 C.F.R. § 153(11). In
5 addition, Section 332(c)(1)(A) of the Communications Act (47 C.F.R. § 332(c)(1)(A))
6 states that commercial mobile radio service providers will be regulated as common
7 carriers. TruConnect provides commercial mobile radio services and therefore, is a
8 common carrier.

9 **Q: AS A RESELLER, HOW DOES TRUCONNECT MEET THE FACILITIES-
10 BASED REQUIREMENT?**

11 **A:** Although Section 214 requires ETCs to provide services using their facilities, at least in
12 part, the FCC has forbore from that requirement with respect to carriers such as
13 TruConnect. In the *Lifeline and Link Up Reform Order*, the FCC granted forbearance
14 from the “own-facilities” requirement contained in Section 214(e)(1)(A) for carriers that
15 are, or seek to become, Lifeline-only ETCs, subject to the following conditions:¹ (1) the
16 carrier must comply with certain 911 requirements and (2) the carrier must file, and the
17 FCC’s Wireline Competition Bureau must approve, a compliance plan providing specific
18 information regarding the carrier’s service offerings and outlining the measures the
19 carrier will take to implement the obligations contained in this Order as well as further
20 safeguards against waste, fraud and abuse the Bureau may deem necessary.

¹ See *Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization, Lifeline and Link Up, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Advancing Broadband Availability Through Digital Literacy Training*, WC Docket No. 11-42, WC Docket No. 03-109, CC Docket No. 96-45, WC Docket No. 12-23, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 12-11, ¶¶ 368, 373 and 379. (rel. Feb. 6, 2012) (“*Lifeline and Link Up Reform Order*”).

1 In accordance with the *Lifeline and Link Up Reform Order*, TruConnect filed a
2 Compliance Plan with the FCC, which the FCC approved on December 26, 2012, a copy
3 of which is attached to the Petition as Exhibit 2. TruConnect commits to providing
4 Lifeline service in Utah in accordance with its FCC-approved Compliance Plan, as
5 amended, and in compliance with applicable state and federal regulations, to the extent
6 amendments thereto may supersede commitments made in the Compliance Plan.

7 **Q: WILL TRUCONNECT PROVIDE ALL SUPPORTED LIFELINE SERVICES?**

8 **A:** Yes. Through its Underlying Carriers, TruConnect is able to provide all of the supported
9 services required by Section 54.101(a) of the FCC’s Rules (47 C.F.R. § 54.101(a)),
10 including voice telephony service and broadband Internet access service (“BIAS”). As
11 required by 47 C.F.R. § 54.101(a)(1), TruConnect’s voice telephony service provides
12 voice grade access to the public switched telephone network through the purchase of
13 wholesale CMRS services from T-Mobile and Verizon, rate plans that provide its
14 customers with minutes of use for local service at no additional charge, and access to
15 emergency services to the extent the local government in its service area has implemented
16 911 or E911 systems. TruConnect’s service is not offered on a distance-sensitive basis
17 and local and domestic long-distance minutes are treated the same. Therefore, the toll
18 limitation requirement for voice telephone services is not applicable. TruConnect’s
19 mobile BIAS provides Lifeline customers with “the capability to transmit data to and
20 receive data from all or substantially all Internet endpoints, including any capabilities that
21 are incidental to and enable the operation of the communications service ...” as required
22 by 47 C.F.R. § 54.400(1).

23 **Q: WHERE DOES TRUCONNECT REQUEST TO BE DESIGNATED AS AN ETC?**

1 **A:** TruConnect requests ETC designation that is statewide in scope to allow the Company to
2 provide Lifeline service wherever its underlying, facilities-based providers have wireless
3 coverage. TruConnect’s requested service area includes federally recognized Tribal
4 Lands located throughout the State of Utah. TruConnect has provided a list of the zip
5 codes within its service area as Exhibit 3 to its Petition.

6 **Q: WILL TRUCONNECT ADVERTISE THE AVAILABILITY OF SUPPORTED**
7 **SERVICES?**

8 **A:** Yes. TruConnect will advertise the availability and rates for its Lifeline services using
9 media of general distribution as required by 47 C.F.R. § 54.201(d)(2). As required by
10 47 C.F.R. § 54.405(c) of the FCC’s Rules, TruConnect’s marketing materials will state, in
11 easily understood language, that: (i) the service is a Lifeline service; (ii) Lifeline is a
12 government assistance program; (iii) the service may not be transferred to someone else;
13 (iv) consumers must meet certain eligibility requirements before enrolling in the Lifeline
14 program; (v) the Lifeline program permits only one Lifeline discount per household; (vi)
15 documentation is necessary for enrollment; and (vii) TruConnect is the provider of the
16 services. Moreover, the Lifeline application/certification form will state that Lifeline is a
17 federal benefit and that consumers who willfully make a false statement in order to obtain
18 the Lifeline benefit can be punished by fine or imprisonment or can be barred from the
19 program. Additionally, TruConnect will disclose the company name under which it does
20 business and the details of its Lifeline service offerings in any Lifeline-related marketing
21 and advertising.

22 TruConnect will engage in advertising campaigns specifically targeted to reach
23 those likely to qualify for Lifeline service, promoting the availability of cost-effective

1 wireless services to this neglected consumer segment. TruConnect may also promote the
2 availability of its Lifeline offering by distributing brochures at various state and local
3 social service agencies and may partner with nonprofit assistance organizations to inform
4 customers of the availability of its Lifeline service. In addition, TruConnect intends to
5 utilize its network of retail partners (once established) to help promote the availability of
6 its Lifeline plans, especially retail outlets that are frequented by low-income consumers.
7 TruConnect will provide retail vendors with signage to be displayed where Company
8 products are sold, and with printed materials describing the Company's Lifeline program.

9 **Q: WILL TRUCONNECT COMPLY WITH THE SERVICE REQUIREMENTS**
10 **APPLICABLE TO THE LIFELINE SUPPORT IT RECEIVES?**

11 **A:** Yes. TruConnect will provide service in Utah by reselling service which it obtains from
12 T-Mobile and Verizon, mobile network operators with operational networks in Utah.
13 Thus, TruConnect will be able to commence offering its Lifeline service to all locations
14 served by T-Mobile and Verizon very soon after receiving approval from the
15 Commission. In accordance with 47 C.F.R. § 54.202(a)(1)(i), TruConnect commits to
16 comply with the service requirements applicable to the low-income support that it
17 receives.

18 **Q: DOES TRUCONNECT HAVE THE ABILITY TO REMAIN FUNCTIONAL IN**
19 **EMERGENCY SITUATIONS?**

20 **A:** Yes. TruConnect will utilize the extensive and well-established network and facilities of
21 T-Mobile and Verizon to provide its Lifeline services. The Company understands that the
22 networks of its Underlying Carriers have access to a reasonable amount of back-up power
23 to ensure functionality without an external power source, can reroute traffic around

1 damaged facilities, and are capable of managing traffic spikes resulting from emergency
2 situations. The Underlying Carriers provide the same functionality to TruConnect and its
3 customers as they provide to themselves and their own customers.

4 **Q: WILL TRUCONNECT MEET CONSUMER PROTECTION AND SERVICE**
5 **QUALITY STANDARDS?**

6 **A:** Yes. In accordance with 47 C.F.R. § 54.202(a)(3), an ETC applicant must demonstrate
7 that it will satisfy applicable consumer protection and service quality standards, and
8 wireless applicants may satisfy this requirement with a commitment to comply with the
9 Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association’s (“CTIA”) Consumer Code for
10 Wireless Service. TruConnect commits to comply with the CTIA Consumer Code for
11 Wireless Service.

12 **Q: IS TRUCONNECT FINANCIALLY AND TECHNICALLY CAPABLE OF**
13 **COMPLYING WITH LIFELINE SERVICE REQUIREMENTS?**

14 **A:** In accordance with 47 C.F.R. § 54.202(a)(4), TruConnect is financially and technically
15 capable of providing Lifeline-supported services. The Company has been offering
16 telecommunications service since 1998 and began providing non-Lifeline wireless
17 service in October 2012, and Lifeline-supported wireless service in May 2013.

18 TruConnect in combination with its affiliate Sage d/b/a TruConnect, already successfully
19 provides wireless services nationwide, including Lifeline services in thirty-nine (39)
20 jurisdictions. TruConnect has not been subject to ETC revocation proceedings. The
21 Company has operated as a telecommunications carrier for twenty-five years and has
22 never had to file for bankruptcy protection, and is supported by the resources of its
23 parent, TSC. TruConnect does not, and does not intend to, offer exclusively Lifeline-

1 supported services and is therefore not exclusively dependent on USAC for its revenue.

2 The result of TruConnect's efforts is that it is fully capable of honoring all its service

3 obligations to customers and regulatory obligations to state and federal regulators.

4 Furthermore, the senior management of TruConnect has great depth in the

5 telecommunications industry and offers extensive telecommunications business technical

6 and managerial expertise to the Company.

7 **Q: WHAT IS TRUCONNECT'S LIFELINE SERVICE OFFERING?**

8 **A:** TruConnect's Lifeline service offering includes unlimited voice minutes, unlimited text

9 messages, and 4.5 gigabytes (GB) of data per month at a net cost of \$0.00 after

10 application of Lifeline support. Residents of Tribal Lands will receive unlimited text

11 messages, and 10 GB of data per month at a net cost of \$0.00 after application of Lifeline

12 support. Customers will be able to purchase additional data as needed. All plans will

13 include nationwide domestic long-distance at no extra per-minute charge and free

14 international calling to Canada, Mexico, China, Vietnam, and South Korea. TruConnect

15 will not assess any usage for access to its free customer services (611). Emergency (911)

16 calls will be free, regardless of service activation or availability of minutes, and will not

17 count against the customer's airtime. TruConnect's Lifeline-supported voice services

18 will meet or exceed the minimum service standards set forth in 47 C.F.R. § 54.408,

19 including as such standards are updated going forward.

20 TruConnect's Lifeline-supported broadband services will also meet the minimum

21 service standards set forth in 47 C.F.R. § 54.408 for mobile broadband internet access

22 services, including for service speed and data usage allowance, as such standards are

23 updated going forward. To the extent TruConnect provides devices for use with Lifeline-

1 supported broadband service, such devices will meet the equipment requirements set
2 forth in 47 C.F.R. § 54.408(f), and TruConnect will not impose an additional or separate
3 tethering charge for mobile data usage below the minimum standard.

4 **Q: WILL TRUCONNECT COMPLY WITH THE LIFELINE ELIGIBILITY**
5 **CERTIFICATION AND ANNUAL RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS?**

6 **A:** Yes. Customers interested in obtaining information on the Lifeline program will be
7 directed to a toll-free telephone number and to the Company’s website, which will
8 contain information regarding the Company’s Lifeline service plans, including a
9 description of the Lifeline program and eligibility criteria. Customers must then apply
10 directly through the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier (“National Verifier”), which
11 they may do online or by submitting all required documentation to the National Verifier
12 by mail. Customers may download a copy of the application form from the Internet
13 (from the National Verifier’s website) or request that a copy be mailed to them.

14 TruConnect utilizes the standard Lifeline application forms as required by FCC Rules,
15 and thus complies with the disclosure and information collection requirements in 47
16 C.F.R. § 54.410(d). TruConnect further confirms that it will not activate a Lifeline
17 service unless or until it has received confirmation from the National Verifier that the
18 consumer is a qualifying low-income household pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.409, and the
19 consumer has completed the required eligibility determination and certification
20 requirements of 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.410, 54.404-54.405. The National Verifier re-certifies
21 all TruConnect Lifeline subscribers within 12 months after the subscriber’s service
22 initiation date and within every 12 months thereafter, as required by 47 C.F.R. §

1 54.410(f). In accordance with the FCC’s Rules, TruConnect will de-enroll subscribers
2 who fail to complete the annual eligibility re-certification.

3 **Q: WHAT MEASURES HAS TRUCONNECT TAKEN TO PREVENT WASTE,**
4 **FRAUD AND ABUSE?**

5 **A:** TruConnect prevents waste, fraud and abuse by complying with the FCC’s Rules
6 governing the Lifeline program, as described in detail in the ETC Petition. For example,
7 TruConnect relies on the National Verifier to determine initial and ongoing eligibility of
8 Utah Lifeline subscribers. The National Verifier queries the National Lifeline
9 Accountability Database (“NLAD”) for every enrollment to determine whether a
10 prospective subscriber is currently receiving a Lifeline service from TruConnect or any
11 other ETC, and whether anyone else living at the prospective subscriber’s residential
12 address is currently receiving Lifeline service. In addition, Company personnel
13 emphasize the “one Lifeline service per household” restriction in their direct sales
14 contacts with potential customers.

15 Consistent with federal regulations, to the extent the Company offers a Lifeline
16 service that does not require it to assess and collect a monthly fee from its subscribers,
17 the Company will not seek USF reimbursement for a subscriber until they have activated
18 the service, by a means specified by the Company in its terms and conditions, and will
19 de-enroll any subscriber that has not used the Company’s Lifeline service as set forth in
20 47 C.F.R. § 54.407(c)(2). An account will be considered active if the authorized
21 subscriber establishes usage, as “usage” is defined by 47 C.F.R. § 54.407(c)(2), during
22 the specified timeframe, currently a period of thirty (30) days, or during the notice period
23 set forth in 47 C.F.R. § 54.405(e)(3), currently a period of fifteen (15) days. In

1 accordance with 47 C.F.R. § 54.405(e)(3), TruConnect will provide the subscriber
2 advance notice, using clear, easily understood language, that the subscriber’s failure to
3 use the Lifeline service within the notice period will result in Lifeline service termination
4 for non-usage. Customers that have been deactivated may participate in the Company’s
5 Lifeline service in the future by reapplying and re-establishing eligibility.

6 **Q: WILL TRUCONNECT COMPLY WITH THE COMMISSION’S REPORTING**
7 **REQUIREMENTS?**

8 A: Yes. TruConnect will provide the Commission a copy of its annual certifications and
9 Lifeline recertification results pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.416 (i.e., FCC Form 555), as
10 well as a copy of its annual report filed pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.422 (i.e., FCC Form
11 481), and will comply with applicable Commission reporting requirements for Lifeline
12 ETCs.

13 **Q: WILL TRUCONNECT COMPLY WITH THE COMMISSION’S REGULATIONS**
14 **GOVERNING LIFELINE SERVICE?**

15 A: Yes. TruConnect will comply with the rules and regulations that the Commission may
16 lawfully impose upon the Company’s provision of Lifeline service.

17 **Q: DOES TRUCONNECT SATISFY THE REQUIREMENTS FOR RECEIVING**
18 **LIFELINE SUPPORT FROM THE UTAH UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND?**

19 A: Yes. Utah Administrative Rule 746-8-403 provides that state Lifeline support “may not
20 exceed \$3.50 per Lifeline subscriber per month of subscription to a service that: . . . (A)
21 meets FCC broadband Lifeline requirements as set forth in 47 C.F.R. 54.408; and (B) for
22 wireless Lifeline, allows, at no charge beyond the basic monthly fee, unlimited texting
23 and at least 750 voice minutes per month[.]” In addition, an ETC may receive an

1 ongoing distribution if it continues “participation in a Commission-approved Lifeline
2 program [and] upon a specific finding of public interest by the Commission.”

3 TruConnect’s Lifeline satisfies the requirements in Utah Administrative Rule 746-8-403
4 by including a mobile broadband component that meets the FCC’s minimum service
5 standard for mobile broadband and by including unlimited voice minutes. In addition, as
6 I will explain, the Commission’s designation of TruConnect as an ETC will serve the
7 public interest.

8 **Q: WILL DESIGNATION OF TRUCONNECT AS AN ETC PROMOTE THE**
9 **PUBLIC INTEREST?**

10 **A:** Yes. Designation of TruConnect as an ETC in Utah will further the purpose of universal
11 service, which is to ensure that low-income consumers have access to affordable and
12 high-quality telecommunications services. Whether because of financial constraints, poor
13 credit history, or intermittent employment, many low-income consumers often lack the
14 countless choices available to most consumers and thus have yet to reap the full benefits
15 of the intensely competitive wireless market. As detailed in the Petition, designating
16 TruConnect as an ETC would significantly benefit low-income consumers eligible for
17 Lifeline services in Utah -- the intended beneficiaries of universal service.

18 **Advantages of TruConnect’s Service Offering**

19 TruConnect offers a unique, easy to use, competitive, and highly affordable
20 wireless telecommunications service, which benefits qualified consumers who either have
21 no other service alternatives or who choose a wireless prepaid solution in lieu of more
22 traditional service. The public interest benefits of TruConnect’s wireless service include
23 larger calling areas (as compared to traditional wireline carriers), the convenience and

1 security afforded by mobile service, and a unlimited amount of voice and generous
2 amount of broadband access included without cost (after application of the Lifeline
3 support), as well as free access to caller ID, call waiting, and voicemail features, and
4 access to 911 services regardless of the number of voice minutes remaining on the
5 Lifeline consumer’s plan. These no cost to consumer services are an invaluable resource
6 for cash-strapped consumers, and the prepaid nature of the service also provides an
7 alternative for “unbanked” consumers.

8 TruConnect’s Lifeline offerings compare favorably with those of other
9 competitive ETCs, and provide Lifeline customers with unlimited voice minutes,
10 unlimited text messages, and a data allotment (meeting the voice and broadband
11 minimum service standards), at no net cost to the customer after application of Lifeline
12 support. TruConnect’s prepaid wireless service is likely to be an especially attractive
13 option for low-income consumers because it alleviates customer concerns regarding
14 hidden costs, varying monthly charges and long-term contract issues.

15 In today’s market, consumers, including qualified Lifeline customers, view the
16 portability and convenience of wireless service not as a luxury, but as a necessity. Mobile
17 service allows children to reach their parents wherever they may be, allows a person
18 seeking employment greater ability to be contacted by potential employers, and provides
19 end users with the ability to contact emergency service providers regardless of location.
20 Mobile service often also serves as a key bridge in closing the homework gap for students
21 who live in rural areas with limited access to broadband.

22 With the comprehensive strength and experience of TruConnect’s management
23 team, the Company’s proven technology-based business model, and TruConnect’s solid

1 history as a Lifeline provider, TruConnect is uniquely positioned to meet the needs of
2 Lifeline customers. Utilizing the Company’s innovative outreach and high integrity
3 enrollment process, and TruConnect remains committed to careful stewardship of the
4 Lifeline program. Without question, prepaid wireless services have become essential for
5 low-income customers, providing them with value for their money, access to emergency
6 services on wireless devices, and a reliable means of contact for prospective employers,
7 social service agencies or dependents. Providing TruConnect with the authority
8 necessary to offer discounted Lifeline service to those without wireless service—or most
9 in danger of losing service altogether—undoubtedly promotes the public interest.

10 **The Benefits of Competitive Choice**

11 Consumers benefit from being able to choose from among a variety of
12 telecommunications service providers. Increasing customer choice promotes promote
13 competition and innovation, thus spurring other carriers to target low-income consumers
14 with service offerings tailored to their needs, ultimately resulting in improved services to
15 consumers. Designation of TruConnect as an ETC will help ensure that quality services
16 are available at “just, reasonable, and affordable rates” as envisioned in Section 254(b)(1)
17 of the Communications Act. Introducing TruConnect into the market as an additional
18 wireless ETC provider will afford low-income Utah residents a wider choice of providers
19 and available services while creating a competitive marketplace as ETCs compete for a
20 finite number of Lifeline-eligible customers. Increasing the competitive marketplace of
21 providers has the potential to effectively increase the penetration rate and reduce the
22 number of individuals not connected to the PSTN.

23 **Impact on the Universal Service Fund**

1 With Lifeline, ETCs only receive support for customers they obtain. The amount of
2 support available to an eligible subscriber is the same whether the support is given
3 through a company such as TruConnect or the Incumbent LEC operating in the same
4 service area. The number of persons eligible for Lifeline support is the same regardless
5 of the number of ETCs; thus, TruConnect will only increase the amount of USF Lifeline
6 funding in situations where it obtains Lifeline customers not already enrolled in another
7 ETC's Lifeline program. By implementing the safeguards set forth in the FCC's Rules
8 and utilizing the NLAD and National Verifier, the likelihood that TruConnect's customers
9 are not eligible or are receiving duplicative support either individually or within their
10 household is greatly minimized. TruConnect's ability to increase the Lifeline
11 participation rate of qualified low-income individuals will further the goal of Congress to
12 provide all individuals with affordable access to telecommunications service, and thus
13 any incremental increases in Lifeline expenditures are far outweighed by the significant
14 public interest benefits of expanding the availability of affordable wireless services to
15 low-income consumers.

16 **Q: IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD TO YOUR**
17 **TESTIMONY?**

18 **A:** Yes. Based on the information in the Petition, including all exhibits provided with the
19 Petition, and my foregoing testimony, TruConnect meets the statutory and regulatory
20 requirements for designation as an ETC in the State of Utah for the purpose of providing
21 Lifeline service to low-income households. TruConnect requests that the Commission
22 grant the Company's ETC Petition promptly so that the Company can offer Lifeline
23 service to low-income Utah households as soon as possible.

1 Q: DOES THIS CONCLUDE YOUR TESTIMONY?

2 A: Yes.

DECLARATION

I, Danielle Perry, state that I am the Chief Compliance Officer of TruConnect Communications, Inc. ("TruConnect"); that I have reviewed the foregoing testimony; and that the statements in the foregoing testimony with respect to TruConnect are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Date: 3/19/2024

DocuSigned by:

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Danielle Perry
Chief Compliance Officer
TruConnect Communications, Inc.

DOCKET NO. 24-2646-01

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I CERTIFY that on March 20, 2024, a true and correct copy of the foregoing was served upon the following as indicated below:

By Email:

Nathan Johnson (njohnson@truconnect.com)

Co-CEO

Danielle Perry (dperry@truconnect.com)

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Office of Consumer Services

/s/ Olivia Fergerstrom

Olivia Fergerstrom