



# Lifeline Across America

NARUC Summer Meeting

Consumer Affairs/Telecom Committees

Lifeline  
Across  
America



# The Working Group

## September 28, 2005

- ◆ Amy Bender, FCC Wireline Competition Bureau
- ◆ Lisa Colosimo, Ohio Public Utilities Commission
- ◆ Bev DeMello, Florida Public Service Commission
- ◆ Greg Fogleman, Florida Public Service Commission
- ◆ Vicki Helfrich, Mississippi Public Utilities Staff
- ◆ Karol Krohn, Indiana Office of the Utility Consumer Council
- ◆ Sharon Lee, FCC Enforcement Bureau
- ◆ Patrice O'Connor, New York Public Service Commission
- ◆ Lauren Patrich, FCC Consumer Governmental Affairs Bureau
- ◆ Dee Porter, Oklahoma Corporation Commission
- ◆ John Ridgway, Iowa Utilities Board
- ◆ Jennifer Salhus, FCC Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
- ◆ Cindi Schieber, FCC Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
- ◆ Sandra Sloane, New York Public Service Commission
- ◆ Robert Somers, FCC Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau
- ◆ Dana Walton-Bradford, FCC Wireline Competition Bureau

# The Public Notice Issued January 10, 2006

- ◆ Success of Previous Outreach
- ◆ Measuring the Success of Outreach
- ◆ Currently Available Information
- ◆ Existence of Joint Outreach
- ◆ Effect of the 2005 Hurricanes
- ◆ Challenges and Obstacles
- ◆ Overall Recommendations

# Comments Received From a Variety of Sources

- ◆ Landline Companies
- ◆ Wireless Companies
- ◆ State PUCs
- ◆ Consumer Advocates
- ◆ Social-Service Agencies
- ◆ Consumers

# FCC/NARUC/ NASUCA Launched

# Lifeline Across America [www.lifeline.gov](http://www.lifeline.gov)

# February 7, 2006

**Welcome to the Home Page for "Lifeline Across America"**

This website provides information and resources regarding federal and state Lifeline and Link-Up programs. Lifeline and Link-Up are programs that help ensure everyone has access to telephone service. These programs provide discounts to income-eligible individuals for both the initial installation costs of telephone service and for monthly telephone bills.

**FEDERAL/STATE WORKING GROUP FORMED**

A federal/state Working Group was formed in 2005 to address the problem of how to reach consumers who may be eligible for Lifeline and Link-Up and ensure they have access to information about the programs and how to apply. The members of the Working Group were chosen from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), and the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA).

July 2005 Press Release announcing the formation of the federal/state Working Group:  
[http://hraunfss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DOC-200129A1.doc](http://hraunfss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-200129A1.doc)

September 2005 Public Notice announcing the members of the federal/state Working Group:  
[http://hraunfss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DA-05-2539A1.doc](http://hraunfss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-05-2539A1.doc)

**WE WANT YOUR INPUT**

To ensure that new outreach materials are targeted to the right consumers and distributed in the best manner possible, the Working Group is seeking input from the public. The Working Group invites responses to the questions below to a dedicated email box: [Lifeline@fcc.gov](mailto:Lifeline@fcc.gov). You may also click on the link at the end of this page and respond directly through this web site. Responses are requested by March 1, 2006.

The questions, which are also contained in a January 10, 2006 public notice available at [http://hraunfss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DA-06-41A1.doc](http://hraunfss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-06-41A1.doc), are the following:

- Successful outreach:** What are successful examples of Lifeline/Link-Up outreach within the last two years? Why was this outreach successful? What form or type of media did this outreach activity take (e.g., advertisements, brochures)? How was the outreach developed? How were the costs covered?
- Less effective outreach:** Are you aware of outreach on Lifeline/Link-Up that was not particularly successful? Why was it not successful?
- Measuring the success of outreach:** How should the success of outreach efforts on Lifeline/Link-Up be measured?
- Currently available information:** If someone contacts your organization asking for information regarding the type of assistance available through Lifeline or Link-Up, what do they receive? What resources do you currently have available to promote the availability of Lifeline and Link-Up to your constituency? What resources would you like to have available? Is there anything on your website about assistance for low-income consumers? Is it specific to Lifeline and Link-Up? Do you produce a hard copy publication to promote Lifeline and Link-Up?
- Joint outreach:** Are you aware of any joint partnerships or outreach activities (e.g., between businesses and government or consumer advocacy groups) that have taken place or are planned in your region? If so, what has been your experience?
- Effects of 2005 Hurricanes:** Have you seen or do you anticipate an increase in the number of consumers that apply for Lifeline and/or Link-Up as a result of the hurricanes? Has your region made changes recently in Lifeline/Link-Up eligibility as a result of the hurricanes? What additional outreach measures would you propose for Lifeline/Link-Up as a result of the hurricanes? Other emergency situations?
- Challenges and Obstacles:** What are some of the challenges/obstacles to implementing a successful outreach program on Lifeline and Link-Up?
- Overall recommendations:** What recommendations would you make in terms of outreach on Lifeline and Link-Up? Does an increase in the number of consumers eligible for or applying to the programs affect how outreach should be done?

**Tell Us What You Think About Outreach For Lifeline And Link-Up**

# Consistent Themes



- ◆ One-on-One Outreach is Critical
- ◆ One Size Does Not Fit All
- ◆ The Message Has Not Reached Some Constituencies

# Consistent Themes (Cont.)

- ◆ Broadcast Media Campaigns Can Be Effective
- ◆ Partnerships Between Government, Carriers, and Community Organizations Have Been Very Effective in All Parts of the Country
- ◆ Outreach on Tribal Lands Has Particular Challenges

# Consistent Themes (Cont.)

- ◆ Automatic Enrollment Can Be Highly Effective
  - Automatic Enrollment will not reach all eligible consumers
- ◆ Standardizing the Enrollment Process and Application Form Would Reduce Confusion

# Consistent Themes (Cont.)

- ◆ Web Resources Are Most Useful to Educate Those Who Do the Outreach

ILEC  
Web site

# Tele-Media Solutions

<http://www.tele-mediasolutions.coop/aboutus.html>

Normal Page / [Low Graphics](#) (visit [loading for slow connections](#))

## Tele-Media Solutions

Your local cooperative connecting you to the world!



Home | **About Us** | By-Laws | Contact Info | General Info | Essential Segment

Image Galleries

- Directors and Corporate Management
- Community Involvement
- Cooperative At Work

Tele-Media Solutions is one of 8 telephone cooperatives and 35 independent telephone companies in Indiana. This Cooperative serves members in portions of Clark, Floyd, Scott and Washington Counties encompassing an exchange area of 120 square miles.



### Our Mission

Tele-Media Solutions is committed to the enduring spirit of member ownership while providing telecommunication, information and media services at the lowest possible cost to the Cooperative membership and providing a safe and productive environment for its employees.

### Our Vision

Tele-Media Solutions will be the premier telecommunication provider in south central Indiana, utilizing progressive technologies with a rural community focus.

### Values

Tele-Media Solutions embraces member focus, community involvement and endures courteous customer service.

### Directors and Corporate Management



August 2003

Sitting left to right: Darby Thomas, Secretary / Treasurer; Ronald King, President; Edward Burnett, Vice President  
Standing left to right: Christine Cook, General Manager; David Miller, Corporate Attorney; Thomas Gray, Director  
Craig Mann, Director; David Souder, Director; Violet Tappin, Director

### BASIC DUTIES OF THE PARTIES

# Florida Public Service Commission

<http://www.psc.state.fl.us/>

Home
About PSC
Agendas & Hearings
Consumer Assistance
Dockets & Filings
Publications
Utility Regulation



**Consumer Corner**

[File your utility complaint on-line...](#)

[ECC's National Do-Not-Call Registry](#)

[Subscribe to Consumer E-Newsletter](#)

**Consumer Tip of the Week: Momentary Electric Outages**

[Have Questions? Visit the MyFlorida Consumer FAQs](#)

[May Consumer Activity Report](#) (PDF File 102K) (1/20/06)

**The PSC Commissioners**



**Our Mission**

Customers are served best by markets that facilitate the efficient provision of safe and reliable utility services at fair prices. The mission of the Florida Public Service Commission is to promote the development of competitive markets - as directed by state and federal law - by removing regulatory barriers to competition, and by emphasizing incentive-based approaches, where feasible, to regulate areas that remain subject to rate of return regulation. Once markets become sufficiently competitive, the Florida Public Service Commission will eliminate regulatory involvement to the extent permitted by law.

**News Releases**

[Items of Interest at Upcoming Agenda Conference 7/18/06](#) (07/14/06)

[PSC to Host Delegation from Paraguay](#) (06/23/06)

[PSC Approves Gulf Power Settlement](#) (06/20/06)

[More On-line News...](#)

**Hot Topics**

- The page limit for electronic filings has been increased from 50 to 100 pages. Please click on the ["E-Filings How To"](#) button in the lower right portion of the Web site to view the Commission's e-filing requirements.
- Hurricane Season 2006 has started. Be prepared! Follow the link to [Hurricane Preparedness](#) for more information.
- Energy Savings**  
Tour the PSC's newest addition to the Web site, the PSC's Conservation House. Find energy savings by scanning through the items in the PSC's interactive Conservation House. Here you will receive tips that may save you money.
- [Local Competition Data Request Files](#)
- [Storm Hardening Activities](#)

**SITE MAP**

**Calendar of Events**

Live Audio/Video Events Scheduled Today 07/17/2006 at 09:30:  
Internal Affairs Conference

- [Audio](#)

[PSC Commission Calendar](#)

[Schedule of Agenda Conferences](#)

[Internal Affairs Agendas](#)

[Schedule of Audio/Video Events & Hearing Dates](#)

**Publicaciones en Español**



**PSC Search**

Advanced Search

By Keyword:

By Docket #:

**Need Larger Text?**

**Statement of Agency Organization and Operations**

**Regulated Utilities**

- Electric
- Natural Gas
- Telecommunications
- Water and Wastewater

**Need Discounted Power Service?**

Learn More About Lifeline Assistance & Link-Up Florida

**PSC Nominating Council**

**PSC Joint Committee on PSC Oversight**

**E-FILINGS**  
*How To*

About PSC
Agendas & Hearings
Consumer Assistance
Dockets & Filings
Publications
Utility Regulation

© 2006 State of Florida | [Copyrights & Disclaimer](#)  
[Privacy Policy](#) | [Contact Info](#) | [Search](#)

**Florida Public Service Commission**

2540 Shumard Oak Blvd  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0650  
1-800-342-3552

# Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission

<http://www.in.gov/iurc/>

**Telecommunications** | **Electric** | **Natural Gas** | **Water/Sewer**

**About the IURC**  
**Hot Topics**  
**News Releases**  
**Legal Matters**  
**Utilities**  
**Consumer Assistance**  
**Regulatory Actions**  
**Industry Issues**  
**Related Links**  
**Home**

Search IURC

**Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission**  
Indiana Government Center  
South  
302 West Washington St.  
Suite E-306  
Indianapolis Indiana 46204  
317-232-2700 office  
317-232-6758 facsimile

## INDIANA UTILITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

- VIDEO FRANCHISE AUTHORITY IN INDIANA!**  
Visit Our New Video Section
- 2006 Electric Summer Capacity Forum**  
Indiana's major electric generating utilities make presentations concerning Summer Capacity preparedness in 2006.  
See Details
- Lifeline/LinkUp**  
A Telephone Assistance Program called Lifeline/Link-up can provide discounted basic telephone services to qualifying residents.  
View our LifeLine/LinkUp page
- How the IURC Serves You**  
The Commission's mission is to assure that utilities and others use adequate planning and resources for the provision of safe and reliable utility services at reasonable cost.  
View Commission Mission Statement
- Consumer Assistance with Utility Services**  
The IURC **Consumer Affairs Division** mediates & investigates disputes between customers and the public utilities under the Commission's jurisdiction.
  - File A Complaint
  - View Utility Rate & Charges
  - Consumer Frequently Asked Questions

**NEW**

**Electronic Filing System**  
Electronic Filing System (EFS) is the electronic case management system of the IURC.  
EFS was developed to process and manage public information filed with the IURC's official Caused cases.  
If you have questions or concerns regarding the use of EFS, please contact our Operations Division at 317-232-2642.

**CLICK HERE TO ENTER Electronic Filing System**

Website questions or comments?  
IURC Webmaster

# Indiana

## Office of Utility Consumer Counselor

<http://www.in.gov/oucc/>

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor. At the top left is the OUCC logo, which consists of four circular icons: a lightbulb, a flame, a telephone, and a water drop. To the right of the logo is a navigation menu with links for Electric, Natural Gas, Telecommunications, and Water/Sewer. Below the navigation menu is a vertical sidebar with links for Home, Welcome, About the OUCC, News, Consumer Publications, Outreach, Contact Us, Utility Complaints, En Español, Employment, Calendar, Links, and Site Map. The main content area features the title 'Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor' and the tagline 'The Advocate for Indiana's Utility Consumers'. Below this are several content blocks: a red box for 'Energy Costs & Safety: Consumer Info' with links to 'A Small Switch: Direct Load Control = Summer Savings', 'Summer Electric Savings Tips', 'Understanding Electric Rates', 'Energy Safety Tips', and 'Tree Trimming & Planting'; a box for 'OpenLines' with links to 'Helpful Tips on Telecom Services', 'Broadband Internet Info', 'Water Bill Savings Tips', and 'Speakers Bureau'; a box for 'Telephone Assistance Program' with links to 'Fact Sheet', 'Application', and 'Promotional Video'; and a box for '2-1-1 Indiana' with the slogan 'Get Connected. Get Answers.'.

# USAC

## United Service Administrative Company

<http://www.usac.org/about/usac/>



### USAC Overview

---

The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) is an independent, not-for-profit corporation designated as the administrator of the federal Universal Service Fund by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). USAC administers Universal Service Fund (USF) programs for high cost companies serving rural areas, low-income consumers, rural health care providers, and schools and libraries. The Universal Service Fund helps provide communities across the country with affordable telecommunications services.

The Universal Service Fund is one fund with four programs. The four programs are:

- **High Cost** - This support ensures that consumers in all regions of the nation have access to and pay rates for telecommunications services that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas.
- **Low Income** - This support, commonly known as Lifeline and Link Up, provides discounts that make basic, local telephone service affordable for more than 7 million low-income consumers.
- **Rural Health Care** - This support provides reduced rates to rural health care providers for telecommunications and Internet services so they pay no more than their urban counterparts for the same or similar telecommunications services.
- **Schools & Libraries** - This support, commonly referred to as E-rate support, provides affordable telecommunications and Internet access services to connect schools and libraries to the Internet. This support goes to service providers that provide discounts on eligible services to eligible schools, school districts, libraries, and consortia of these entities.

High Cost and Low Income support is managed by the High Cost and Low Income Division (HCLID). Rural Health Care support is managed by the Rural Health Care Division (RHCD). Schools and Libraries support is managed by the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD). USAC has a diverse 19-member Board of Directors comprised of representatives of universal service stakeholders.

Last modified on 1/6/2006

# Possible Next Steps to Improve Outreach on Lifeline and Link-Up

- ◆ Encourage public/private partnerships within each state
- ◆ Initiate a National Lifeline Awareness Week

# Possible Next Steps to Improve Outreach on Lifeline and Link-Up (Cont.)

- ◆ Expand the information available to consumers when they call the FCC
- ◆ Initiate regular communication among federal government agencies
- ◆ Further upgrades to Web resources

# Possible Next Steps to Improve Outreach on Lifeline and Link-Up (Cont.)

- ◆ Explore the feasibility of greater, perhaps nationwide, broadcast and/or print media
- ◆ Create Model Bill Inserts for Non-Telephone Utilities

# More Specific Strategies Involving Action by ETC

- ◆ Ask ETCs to partner with PUCs, Social Service Agencies, Consumers Advocates, and Community-Based Organizations
- ◆ Ask ETCs continually and routinely to update their information on USAC's Web site [[www.lifelinesupport.org](http://www.lifelinesupport.org)]
- ◆ Ask ETCs to include information about Lifeline and Link-Up on all disconnection notices and payment plan confirmation letters
- ◆ Ask ETCs to identify tribal liaisons and to designate specific company employees to establish and maintain regular contact with the tribal liaisons

# Where Do We Go From Here?

- \*The Working Group will prioritize among these next steps and begin implementing action items to improve outreach and awareness for Lifeline and Link-UP
- \*The Working Group is just that... a “working” group... which will continue to “work” toward its mission...

*Lifeline Across America*

# If you would like more information, please contact:

Lauren Patrich, FCC, at  
[lauren.patrich@fcc.gov](mailto:lauren.patrich@fcc.gov)

Bev DeMello, Florida PSC, at  
[bdemello@psc.state.fl.us](mailto:bdemello@psc.state.fl.us)

Karol Krohn, Indiana Office of the Utility  
Consumer Council, at [kkrohn@oucc.IN.gov](mailto:kkrohn@oucc.IN.gov)

John Ridgway, Iowa Utilities Board, at  
[john.ridgway@iub.state.ia.us](mailto:john.ridgway@iub.state.ia.us)