

**Commissioner Simon LifeLine Comments**  
**November 19, 2010**

I support Commissioner John A. Bohn's proposed decision, which begins the process of modernizing the California LifeLine program. While California LifeLine has helped move closer to the Universal Service goal of a 95 percent penetration rate for many years, assisting almost 2 million households, its policies should provide an evolving level of telecommunications services, taking into account advances in telecommunications and information technologies and services in order to help connect low income communities in the 21st century.

This decision adopts a new sustainable methodology that provides for a phase-in period temporarily capping Lifeline rates while also making the carriers whole, is technology neutral by allowing for voluntary participation by wireless and non-traditional carriers, and also addresses concerns of a ballooning Lifeline fund. It also ensures that the California Public Utilities Commission will continue to monitor impacts on ratepayers, makes sure that the basic rate remains just and reasonable, and that the LifeLine rate remains affordable for low-income consumers.

Our decision to have subsequent phases and workshops to deal with implementation issues, consumer education, and to provide guidance on how non-traditional carriers would participate in the LifeLine program recognizes that our processes should be reviewed and may need clarification in some areas. While work remains, the time has come to further enable low income consumers to reap the benefits of advances in the telecommunications industry.