

**California Public Utilities Commission  
Communications Division En Banc  
“A Provider Perspective on the Future of California's  
Communications Grid”**

**March 4, 2020, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

**CPUC Auditorium  
505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102  
Webcast: [www.adminmonitor.com/ca/cpuc](http://www.adminmonitor.com/ca/cpuc)  
More information: [www.cpuc.ca.gov/CDenbanc](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/CDenbanc)**

**Objective:** To provide an opportunity for the commissioners to hear from providers on some of the same topics addressed in the May 2019 En Banc, where we heard from a wide range of stakeholders who rely on the communications grid.

**Morning Session**

**Opening Remarks by Commissioners (10-10:15 a.m.)**

**Affordability (10:20-11:10 a.m.)**

*The Affordability panel will focus on the communications needs of low income and disabled populations in the coming years. Closing the broadband adoption gap continues to be a challenge. From the provider perspective, what issues may arise as network speeds increase and devices proliferate, and how will communications services continue to be affordable?*

Moderator: Travis LeBlanc, Partner and Vice Chair, Cyber/Data/Privacy Practice, Cooley LLP; and Member, U.S. Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board

Panelists: Preston Rhea, Director of Engineering, Policy Program, Monkeybrains; John Gutierrez, Senior Director, Government Affairs, Comcast; Fassil Fenikile, Assistant Vice President, Regulatory Affairs, AT&T; Kimberly McKinley, Chief Marketing Officer, UTOPIA Fiber

**Rural and Tribal Growth and Prosperity (11:15 a.m.-12:25 p.m.)**

*Broadband availability in California is uneven with consumers in urban centers having more choice and faster speeds. The lack of broadband options prevents families and businesses outside California's major cities from growing and developing. Moreover, communications infrastructure is critical to public safety. From a provider solutions perspective, what is available, or will be available, to significantly improve broadband access in rural and Tribal areas?*

Moderator: Forest James, Chief Executive Officer, EnerTribe

Panelists: Mariel Triggs, Chief Executive Officer, MuralNet; Michael Ort, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer, Inyo Networks; Phillip Deneef, Chief Strategy Officer, GeoLinks



**Break for Lunch (12:25-1:30 p.m.)**

**Afternoon Session**

**Piloting Service-Based Competition (1:30-2:20 p.m.)**

*Removing barriers to open and competitive markets and promoting fair product and price competition is one of the CPUC's directives. Deploying last mile broadband infrastructure to customers is a significant barrier to new market entrants, but cities like Fullerton, California have introduced service-based competition, where the company that owns the infrastructure owner becomes a wholesale provider to other internet service providers. This panel will talk about deployment models that provide consumers with more choices.*

Moderator: Ernesto Falcon, Senior Legislative Counsel, Electronic Frontier Foundation

Panelists: Ben Bawtree-Jobson, Chief Executive Officer, SiFi Networks; Nathan Patrick, Chief Technology Officer, Sonic.net; Kimberly McKinley, Chief Marketing Officer, UTOPIA Fiber

**Using Technology to Improve Network Resiliency (2:25-3:15 p.m.)**

*Backup power is necessary to ensure networks function when power is cut off. Traditionally, providers have relied on a combination of batteries and generators to fulfil this duty. This panel will talk about new ways to provide network resiliency that can augment current approaches and how manufacturers are ensuring these approaches are safe from a cybersecurity standpoint.*

Moderator: Joyce Steingass, Senior Utilities Engineer, Energy Division, CPUC

Panelists: John Ahrens, Program Director, US West, Schneider Electric (microgrids); Andrew Skumanich, Ph.D, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, SolarVision Consulting (microgrids); Darin Painter, Director of Sales and Product Management, Stationary Power, Plug Power (hydrogen fuel cells); Ray Schnell, Vice President, Global Business Development, NantEnergy (zinc-air and lithium ion batteries)

**Closing Comments from Commissioners (3:15-3:30 p.m.)**

***NOTE: Participants in this event are advised that it is subject to the CPUC's Ex Parte Rules. If a participant's comments touch on an open proceeding, staff may direct the participant to file an Ex Parte Notice.***



List of proceedings that may be related to discussion at the En Banc:

Affordability panel

- Framework and Processes for Assessing the Affordability of Utility Service (R.18-07-006)
- California Universal Telephone Service (LifeLine) Program (R.11-03-013)

Rural and Tribal panel

- California Advanced Services Fund (R.12-10-012)
- California High Cost Fund A (R.11-11-007)

Service-based competition

- Pole database and competitive access (R. 17-03-009, I.17-06-02, R.17-06-028)
- Disaster relief measures (R.18-03-011)

Network resiliency

- Disaster relief measures (R.18-03-011)
- De-energization (public safety power shutoff) (R.18-12-005)
- Microgrids and Resiliency (R.19-09-009)

