January 2, 2019

To Whom It Concerns:

Please do not move forward with this plan to cap an under-utilized program. A cap will only serve as a way to further deter people from receiving crucial assistance.

As a country, we cannot require internet access for public benefits and then refuse to provide a subsidy for obtaining those benefits.

In Kentucky, we are forcing Medicaid patients to report work hours, education time, volunteer hours, and any wage changes starting on April 1, 2019. Medicare patients often have forms to complete and submit online, monitor their health, and much more using online tools. We need Lifeline assistance to help make sure no one falls behind in their reporting, as punishment for doing so I a full lock out of mental health and health coverage benefits. Kentucky needs this subsidy to grow, not be capped. Since we are one of many states now imposing such requirements, it’s clear we are going to need to improve, not reduce, this program.

There is a significant body of research showing that keeping in touch with family and friends promotes the well-being of our elderly, our sick, our disabled, and our individuals with mental illness. Helping them maintain an internet and/or mobile phone connection costs far less than the ramifications of severing people from society. Unless you count death an acceptable cost component.

People need mobile connectivity in order to apply for jobs, make doctors appointments, obtain information from schools, get called in for extra shifts, and to report crimes. It is better for all of us if some of us with lower incomes receive a subsidy for this.

Thank you,

Marcie Timmerman

2692 Woodlawn Way, Lexington KY 40517

Marcie.reed@gmail.com