

San Carlos Apache Telecommunications Utility, Inc.

Key Federal Telecommunications Issues

Federal Lifeline Program

- Increase Enhanced Tribal Lifeline Credit for Broadband
 - Current credit (up to \$34.25) was established prior to broadband service being added as a Lifeline support service
 - Broadband adoption in rural Tribal areas is 31.6% vs 53.3% nation wide
 - The Lifeline program is designed to help increase service adoption rates
- Reinstatement of the National School Lunch Program Eligibility Criteria
 - The FCC removed this criteria in 2016
 - This program is a vital path to Lifeline program eligibility in Tribal areas

Federal Universal Service Program

- Tribal Broadband Factor
 - NTTA proposal to increase universal service funding to rural Tribal areas
 - Would provide 25% increase in funding to carriers
 - FCC will address, at least partially, in an upcoming further notice
- Operating Expense Caps
 - NTTA proposed relief from FCC-imposed caps on recoverable operating expenses
 - FCC may address in the near future
- Broadband Funding
 - The FCC added broadband service as a supportable service in 2011
 - Since then, the total USF budget has not increased
 - The FCC is set to address a part of the problem, but there is more to do

Rural Healthcare Program

- Recent FCC Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
- Possible increase of \$400M cap (in place since 1997)
- Need to protect/focus support in Tribal areas

Substantially Underserved Trust Areas (SUTA) Refinancing

- Currently, the SUTA program (9 U.S.C. 936f) does not allow for refinancing of current loans
- Allowing refinancing under SUTA's terms would be an effective method for increased deployment of broadband-capable networks in Tribal areas.