

Nebraska Public Service Commission

Crystal Rhoades

Commissioner
Second District



300 The Atrium, 1200 N Street, Lincoln, NE 68508

Post Office Box 94927, Lincoln, NE 68509-4927

Website: psc.nebraska.gov

Phone: (402) 630-6875

E-mail: crystal.rhoades@nebraska.gov

NEBRASKA CONSUMER HOTLINE:

1-800-526-0017

May 31, 2018

By ECFS

Marlene Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Nebraska Public Service Commissioner Crystal Rhoades *Ex Parte* Letter: WC Docket Nos. 17-287, 11-42, 09-197

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On May 28-29, 2018, Commissioner Brendan Carr visited the State of Nebraska. While I did not have the opportunity to meet with him, I wanted to file a letter to reiterate my support for the Lifeline program. This letter is electronically submitted in accordance with 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206(b).

When Commissioner Carr visited Nebraska, he met with farmers and rural residents and discussed broadband deployment with them. While I am a strong supporter of rural broadband deployment, there is another important issue facing all Nebraskans – the elimination of Lifeline services. The Federal Communication Commission has proposed a ban on Lifeline support for non-facilities based providers.¹ The Nebraska Public Service Commission filed comments arguing that this ban would harm Nebraskans and all Americans. “The Commission’s proposal will make it more difficult for low-income consumers to obtain wireless connectivity.”² In some areas of Nebraska, wireless resellers may be the only wireless Lifeline option because many major market carriers no longer provide Lifeline as an ETC.³ The FCC’s proposal will reduce comparable and competitive choices in the Lifeline market, contrary to the goals of the 1996 Telecommunications Act. I implore Commissioner Carr and the FCC to ensure that low-income Americans can continue to be connected through the Lifeline program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Crystal Rhoades". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Commissioner Crystal Rhoades
Nebraska Public Service Commission

¹ See *In the Matter of Bridging the Digital Divide for Low-Income Consumer et al.*, Fourth Report and Order et al., WC 17-287 et al., Fourth Report and Order, Order On Reconsideration, Memorandum Opinion and Order, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and Notice of Inquiry (rel. December 1, 2017) at Paras. 67-73.

² See *Comments of Nebraska Public Service Commission*, WC 17-287 et al. (Feb. 2018).

³ See *Id.*