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PUBLIC NOTICE

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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DA 98-987
May 22, 1998

**COMMISSION TO HOLD EN BANC HEARING JUNE 8, 1998
ON PROPOSALS TO REVISE THE METHODOLOGY FOR DETERMINING
UNIVERSAL SERVICE SUPPORT
CC Docket Nos. 96-45 and 97-160**

The Federal Communications Commission will hold an *en banc* hearing on Monday, June 8, 1998, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 pm, in the Commission meeting room, Room 856 at 1919 M. Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. The Commission has invited the state members of the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service to also preside at this *en banc*. At the *en banc* hearing, the Commission and the state members of the Joint Board will review certain proposals for revising the methodology for determining federal universal service support for non-rural carriers.

The Commission initially decided in the *Universal Service Order*¹ that the federal fund would provide at least 25 percent of the total support necessary for non-rural carriers (25/75 decision), beginning January 1, 1999. Recently, the Commission stated in its Report to Congress on Universal Service² that it would reconsider the share of federal support before implementing the new high cost support mechanism.

Pursuant to the Commission's April 15, 1998 public notice,³ several parties filed with the Commission alternative proposals. At the *en banc*, the Commission and the state Joint

¹ Federal State Joint Board on Universal Service, Report & Order, CC Docket No. 96-45, 12 FCC Rcd 8776 (1997), as corrected by the Federal State Joint Board on Universal Service, CC Docket 96-45, *Errata*, FCC 97-157 (rel. June 4, 1997), *appeal pending*, *Texas Office of Public Utility Counsel v. FCC*, No. 97-60421 (5th Cir. filed June 25, 1997).

² Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Report to Congress, CC Docket No. 96-45, FCC 98-67 (rel. Apr. 10, 1998) (*Report to Congress*).

³ Common Carrier Bureau Seeks Comment on Proposals to Revise the Methodology for Determining Universal Service Support, *Public Notice*, CC Docket No. 96-45 and 97-160, DA 98-715 (rel. Apr. 15, 1998).

Board members will hear from and question the parties that filed proposals.

The *en banc* is open to the public, and seating will be available on a first come, first served basis. A transcript of the *en banc* will be available 10 days after the event on the FCC's Internet site. The URL address for the FCC's Internet Home Page is <<http://www.fcc.gov> >.

The *en banc* will also be carried live on the Internet. Internet users may listen to the real-time audio feed of the *en banc* by accessing the FCC Internet Audio Broadcast Home Page. Step-by-step instructions on how to listen to the audio broadcast, as well as information regarding the equipment and software needed, are available on the FCC Internet Audio Broadcast Home Page. The URL address for this home page is <http://www.fcc.gov/realaudio/>.

News Media Contact: Rochelle Cohen (202) 418-0253

Common Carrier Bureau Contacts: Emily Hoffnar (202) 418-7396; ehoffnar@fcc.gov

Chuck Keller (202) 418-7380; ckeller@fcc.gov

Jane Whang (202) 418-7149; jwhang@fcc.gov