

To the Chairman and Commissioners:

I am submitting this brief memo in SUPPORT of enabling greater access by all Americans, but especially those with lower incomes, as proposed by the Commission in Proceeding No. 10-90.

In 1983, I wrote and managed to passage California's groundbreaking Moore Universal Telecommunication Services Act. The law, which introduced to America the concept of rate-balanced lifeline telecommunications, initially through various financial and community mechanisms made it possible for all Californians to enjoy affordable, top quality telephone service. It was the inspiration for the nation's existing Lifeline program, incorporated in the 1996 National Telecommunications Reform Act. The Moore USTA has since been amended to include wireless and broadband services in similar fashion. Thus, ten percent of Americans already enjoy the access that this Proceeding contemplates. It's time to extend this access to all Americans.

Aside from the obvious benefits in terms of education, entertainment, and civic edification, access to broadband makes possible grassroots entrepreneurship and enhanced, citizen-driven local governance. Also, the larger the market, the more incented are providers of these services -- public and private -- to improve and enlarge their offerings, and to seek economies of scale that can keep or even lower the price of service per customer.

There is no valid argument to not expanding the national Lifeline program. It has my hearty support. Thank you for your attention and for your initiative, pursuing communications equality for all Americans.

Sincerely,

Robert Jacobson, PhD | Former Principal Consultant, 1981-1989  
California State Assembly, Committee on Utilities & Commerce | Currently, Chairman & Strategist,  
Atelier Tomorrow Inc., A Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation for Urban and Regional Innovation