


Texas House of Representatives

State Representative

Helen Giddings

District 109

FILED/ACCEPTED

MAR - 1 2011

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

February 22, 2011

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554
Julius.Genachowski@fcc.gov

Re: **Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service Lifeline and Link Up**
CC Docket No. 96-45; WC Docket 03-109

Dear Chairman Genachowski,

As a State Representative of district 109, comprising southern Dallas, Lancaster, DeSoto, and Cedar Hill, I wish to express my sincerest hope that the upcoming FCC ruling regarding the future of the Universal Service Fund (USF) and Lifeline Program will ensure the continuation of the unique and vital services the USF and Lifeline provide.

In my district alone, more than 13,000 Texans live in poverty, and they are the individuals that the Lifeline Program serves. A truly unique program, Lifeline offers discounted wireless and landline telephone service to households that meet the federal poverty guidelines and also use an assistance program such as food stamps or Medicaid. One of the most redeeming qualities of this program, especially considering the current status of our federal and state budgets, is that this program is not funded by taxpayer dollars, but by a percentage of the long distance service revenue of telecommunications companies.

By providing telephone service to those who may otherwise be unable to afford it, the USF and Lifeline Program make these individuals more desirable candidates for employment than someone without a contact phone number. The ultimate goal of this program is to make individuals employable, and therefore eventually move them away from assistance programs.

I support initiatives taken by the Commission to modernize and update the program by eliminating waste and fraud, but I ask the Commission to maintain the Lifeline Program. Without this program many seniors in my district would have no telephone service.

A few months ago, I had the opportunity to visit with Ms. Clyburn and Ms. Baker, in my position as former chair of the National Foundation for Women Legislators. I was impressed by the thoughtful manner in which they approached their work and their willingness to listen.

I look forward to perhaps meeting you Mr. Chairman, at some time in the future.

Sincerely,

Helen Giddings
State Representative
District 109

Cc: Commissioner Michael J. Copps: Michael.Copps@fcc.gov
Commissioner Robert McDowell: Robert.McDowell@fcc.gov
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn: Mignon.Clyburn@fcc.gov
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker: Meredith.Baker@fcc.gov

Committees: Appropriations • Business & Industry • Chair-Subcommittee on Business & Economic Development & Regulatory Agencies

P.O. Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768-2910
512-463-0933
FAX: 512-463-5887

1510 N. Hampton, Suite #340
DeSoto, Texas 75115
972-224-6795
FAX: 972-228-6796

No. of Copies rec'd 0
List ABCDE