

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Nebraska	)	Application No. NUSF-2
Public Service Commission, on	)	
its own motion, seeking to	)	
establish guidelines for the	)	
administration of the Nebraska	)	
Lifeline Program.	)	
	)	
	)	
	)	
	)	
In the Matter of the Nebraska	)	Application No. C-1645
Public Service Commission, on	)	
its own motion, seeking to	)	ORDER APPROVING NAME CHANGE
establish a Lifeline and Link-Up	)	
Plan for the State of Nebraska.	)	Entered: April 29, 2003

BY THE COMMISSION:

O P I N I O N     A N D     F I N D I N G S

On March 4, 2003, the Commission initiated this proceeding seeking comments on a proposal to change the name of the Lifeline and Link-up programs to the Nebraska Telephone Assistance Program (NTAP). The Commission sought comments on three questions. First the Commission questioned whether the name change would still be consistent with the statutory reference in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 86-329. Second, the Commission questioned whether it had the authority to change the name of the program. Finally, the Commission asked parties to comment on whether there is alternative name or names that would better suit the programs.

The Commission received comments from one party, Citizens Telecommunications Company of Nebraska d/b/a Frontier Communications of Nebraska (Frontier). Frontier noted concerns with the Commission's proposal to change the name of the Lifeline and Link-Up program. Frontier stated that changing the name could lead to confusion and may cause hardship if companies are no longer able to collect federal funds because of the name change. Frontier also recommended referring to the program as the Nebraska Low-Income Telephone Assistance Program. Frontier stated that customers might confuse the proposed name with directory assistance.

Upon consideration of the comments filed, the Commission finds that the name of the Lifeline/Link-up program should be changed. Currently, when many consumers are questioned or call

about Lifeline, they are referring to another Lifeline program providing medical assistance to Nebraska consumers. This has caused confusion amongst consumers and state agencies promoting the Lifeline/Link-Up program. Despite the concerns voiced by Frontier, the Commission believes that the name change will cause less confusion in the future. The Commission also notes that other states have used the same name or one similar to the name proposed by the Commission.<sup>1</sup> The Commission does not believe that this name change would in any way hinder the ability of companies to receive federal support.

Finally, the Commission finds that although this program is aimed at assisting low-income telephone customers, we do not wish to include that in the name as it presents an unwanted stigma for those who may qualify but do not want to be referred to as low-income consumers. We therefore, find that the name should be changed from the "Nebraska Lifeline/Link-Up" program to the "Nebraska Telephone Assistance Program" or "NTAP."

O R D E R

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Nebraska Public Service Commission that the name of the Lifeline/Link-Up program be and it is hereby changed to the Nebraska Telephone Assistance Program or NTAP.

MADE AND ENTERED at Lincoln, Nebraska, this 29th day of April, 2003.

NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
COMMISSIONERS CONCURRING:

Chair

ATTEST:

Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> The Washington Utilities Commission uses the name "Washington Telephone Assistance Program or WTAP" when referring to their Lifeline/Link-Up program. See e.g., [www.wutc.wa.gov](http://www.wutc.wa.gov).