

Resolution Concerning Low Income Components of the Federal
Universal Service Mechanism

WHEREAS, On December 21, 2000, the FCC released an Order requesting the Universal Service Joint Board undertake a review of Lifeline and Link Up service for all low-income customers, including a review of the income eligibility criteria; and

WHEREAS, The FCC's default eligibility standards for both Lifeline and Link-Up included enrollment in any of the following programs: Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), food stamps, Federal Public Housing Assistance (including Section 8), or the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF); and

WHEREAS, Welfare reform encourages independence and migration from welfare as we know it; and

WHEREAS, National policy encourages support for low income households past welfare; and

WHEREAS, The telephone is a useful tool for joining and advancing in the workforce; and

WHEREAS, The TIAP report released on July 19, 2000 indicates there is no relation between the percent of low-income households and the percent lifeline take rate; and

WHEREAS, The FCC has stated its "objective that the fund not be any larger than is necessary to achieve the various goals of

section 254"; *now therefore be it*

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) convened in its 2001 Winter Committee Meetings in Washington D.C., expresses its support for the policy goals of the Lifeline and Linkup programs; *and be it further*

RESOLVED, That NARUC encourages the Joint Board, FCC, and States to explore alternative mechanisms, including automatic enrollment, to efficiently target and distribute funding to consumers, and determine eligibility for Lifeline/Link-Up support; *and be it further*

RESOLVED, That NARUC supports implementing mechanisms to insure accountability of the low-income programs; *and be it further*

RESOLVED, That the General Counsel is directed to make these positions known to the Joint Board and FCC through appropriate means.

Sponsored by the Committee on Telecommunications

Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors, February 28, 2001.