



NARUC
National Association of Regulatory
Utility Commissioners

For Immediate Release

Contact: Regina Davis, rdavis@naruc.org

NARUC Supports Lifeline Awareness Week September 14-18 to Help Communities Access Phone and Broadband

WASHINGTON (September 11, 2020) — The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners will observe its Annual Lifeline Awareness Week campaign September 14-18. Since 2009, the first week after Labor Day has been designated by NARUC, state regulatory commissions, the Federal Communications Commission and the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates as a time to build more awareness around the Lifeline program.

Under the federal Lifeline Program, low-income consumers who participate in certain public assistance and veterans' pension programs or qualify based on income can receive a discount of up to \$9.25 per month off their monthly bill for phone, broadband or bundled phone and broadband service, and up to \$34.25 per month for residents of Tribal lands. Information on program eligibility and rules is available at <http://www.lifelinesupport.org>.

This year, the coronavirus pandemic has underscored the need for individuals to stay connected through phone and broadband access. NARUC and the FCC recognized the need for greater awareness of the Lifeline program and issued a joint letter outlining measures to facilitate better broader access. (See the letter at <https://bit.ly/2MkDOPK>.)

"Access to Lifeline is more important now more than ever," said NARUC President and Commissioner Brandon Presley, of Mississippi. "We are all acutely aware of the unprecedented impact of COVID-19 on our society, particularly, the critical need for Americans to have reliable, sustained connectivity to loved ones, telework, job searches, remote learning and telehealth, as we maintain social distancing to slow the spread of the coronavirus."

NARUC was an influential voice in the recently expanded access to the National Eligibility Verifier, the centralized system that determines consumers' eligibility for Lifeline and enables state agencies to better assist individuals to apply for and enroll in the program. Also, resources on NARUC's website explain the benefits and key aspects of Lifeline. An animated video, *Lifeline: It's a Life Changer*, and the *Lifeline Benefit* infographic were introduced last year to help close the information gap. See <http://bit.ly/NARUCLifeline> to access these resources.

Throughout the awareness week, NARUC will post information highlighting the benefits of Lifeline on social media using the hashtags **#LifelineAwarenessWeek** and **#Lifeline2020**.

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About NARUC

NARUC is a non-profit organization founded in 1889 whose members include the governmental agencies that are engaged in the regulation of utilities and carriers in the fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. NARUC's member agencies regulate telecommunications, energy, and water utilities. NARUC represents the interests of state public utility commissions before the three branches of the federal government.