FILED
DEC 12 2024
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
G.P.S.C.

DOCKET# 55633
DOCUMENT# 220694

COMMISSIONERS:

JASON SHAW, Chairman
TIM G. ECHOLS, Vice-Chairman
FITZ JOHNSON
LAUREN "BUBBA" McDONALD
TRICIA PRIDEMORE

REECE McALISTER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SALLIE TANNER
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Georgia Public Service Commission

(404) 656-4501
(800) 282-5813

244 WASHINGTON STREET, SW
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334-5701

FAX: (404) 656-2341
psc.ga.gov

Docket No. 55633

In Re: Application of TruConnect Communications, Inc. d/b/a TruConnect for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Georgia

ORDER ON APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION AS AN ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER

Background

On February 29, 2024, TruConnect Communications, Inc. d/b/a TruConnect ("TruConnect") filed with the Georgia Public Service Commission ("Commission") its Application for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Georgia ("Application"). Staff issued data requests to TruConnect on August 22, 2024, and TruConnect filed responses on September 27, 2024 and amended responses on October 23, 2024.

TruConnect is not seeking Universal Service Fund support for the purpose of providing service to high cost areas but instead to offer Lifeline-discounted wireless phone service to low-income individuals that meet the Federal Communications Commission's eligibility criteria.

TruConnect asserts that it meets all of the federal requirements for designation as an ETC. 47 C.F.R. § 54.101(a) requires ETCs to provide the following services and functionality: voice grade access to the public switched network or its functional equivalent; minutes of use for local service provided at no additional charge to end users; access to the emergency services provided by local government or other public safety organization, such as 911 and enhanced 911, to the extent the local government in an eligible carrier's service area has implemented 911 or enhanced 911 systems; and toll limitation services to qualifying low-income consumers.

TruConnect's basic service offering is a wireless-based service, which includes unlimited voice and text, and 4.5 GB of data per month at no cost to the consumer after application of the $9.25 Lifeline discount. TruConnect provides a free SIM card to all Lifeline customers. TruConnect does not charge activation fees or any other non-recurring fees to initiate service in Georgia.

TruConnect also committed to "advertise the availability of such services and the charges therefor using media of general distribution." 47 U.S.C. §214(e)(1)(B). TruConnect provided its proposed Georgia-specific advertising.

As TruConnect is a reseller, it requested from the FCC forbearance from the facilities requirements of 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1)(A). The FCC granted forbearance to TruConnect on December 26, 2012.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommended that the Commission designate TruConnect as an ETC in the counties shown in Attachment 1 for the limited purpose of providing Lifeline service, subject to the following conditions:

- The authority to provide service in the counties listed in Attachment 1 is conditioned upon the use of AT&T Mobility, T-Mobile USA, and/or Verizon Wireless as underlying carrier(s). The use of any other underlying carrier(s) in Georgia will require separate approval by the Commission.

- The Commission reserves the right to conduct audits as needed to determine that the funds are used for permitted purposes.

- TruConnect's ETC designation may at any time be suspended or revoked by order of the Commission.

The Commission finds Staff's recommendation reasonable and hereby adopts Staff's recommendation.

* * * * *

WHEREFORE, it is

ORDERED, that TruConnect is granted ETC designation for the limited purpose of providing Lifeline service in the counties shown in Attachment 1.

ORDERED FURTHER, that the authority to provide service in the counties listed in Attachment 1 is conditioned upon the use of AT&T Mobility, T-Mobile USA, and/or Verizon Wireless as underlying carrier(s). The use of any other underlying carrier(s) in Georgia will require separate approval by the Commission.

ORDERED FURTHER, that the Commission reserves the right to conduct audits as needed to determine that the funds are used for permitted purposes.

ORDERED FURTHER, that TruConnect's ETC designation may at any time be suspended or revoked by order of the Commission.

ORDERED FURTHER, that this ETC designation is conditioned upon TruConnect's compliance with applicable state law, applicable Commission rules and orders and applicable federal law, rules and regulations.

ORDERED FURTHER, that a motion for reconsideration, rehearing, oral argument, or any other motion shall not stay the effective date of this Order, unless otherwise ordered by the Commission.

ORDERED FURTHER, that jurisdiction over this matter is expressly retained for the purpose of entering such further Order(s) as this Commission may deem just and proper.

The above by action of the Commission in Administrative Session on the 5th day of November 2024.

Sallie Tanner
Executive Secretary

12-12-24
DATE

Jason Shaw
Chairman

12-12-24
DATE

ATTACHMENT 1

COUNTIES

Appling
Atkinson
Bacon
Baker
Baldwin
Banks
Barrow
Bartow
Ben Hill
Berrien
Bibb
Bleckley
Brantley
Brooks
Bryan
Bulloch
Burke
Butts
Calhoun
Camden
Candler
Carroll
Catoosa
Charlton
Chatham
Chattahoochee
Chattooga
Cherokee
Clarke
Clay
Clayton
Clinch
Cobb
Coffee
Colquitt
Columbia
Cook
Coweta
Crawford
Crisp
Dade
Dawson
Decatur
De Kalb
Dodge
Dooly
Dougherty
Douglas
Early
Echols
Effingham
Elbert
Emanuel
Evans
Fannin
Fayette
Floyd
Forsyth
Franklin
Fulton
Gilmer
Glascock
Glynn
Gordon
Grady
Greene
Gwinnett
Habersham
Hall
Hancock
Haralson
Harris
Hart
Heard
Henry
Houston
Irwin
Jackson
Jasper
Jeff Davis
Jefferson
Jenkins
Johnson
Jones
Lamar
Lanier
Laurens
Lee
Liberty
Lincoln
Long
Lowndes
Lumpkin
Mcduffie
Mcintosh
Macon
Madison
Marion
Meriwether
Miller
Mitchell
Monroe
Montgomery
Morgan
Murray
Muscogee
Newton
Oconee
Oglethorpe
Paulding
Peach
Pickens
Pierce
Pike
Polk
Pulaski
Putnam
Quitman
Rabun
Randolph
Richmond
Rockdale
Schley
Screven
Seminole
Spalding
Stephens
Stewart
Sumter
Talbot
Taliaferro
Tattnall
Taylor
Telfair
Terrell
Thomas
Tift
Toombs
Towns
Treutlen
Troup
Turner
Twiggs
Union
Upson
Walker
Walton
Ware
Warren
Washington
Wayne
Webster
Wheeler
White
Whitfield
Wilcox
Wilkes
Wilkinson
Worth