BEFORE THE
GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF PETITION OF	)	
FRONTIER COMMUNICATIONS	)	
OF GEORGIA LLC FOR AN ORDER	)	Docket No. _____
CONFIRMING RELINQUISHMENT OF ITS	)	
ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS	)	
CARRIER DESIGNATION	)	

PETITION OF FRONTIER COMMUNICATIONS OF GEORGIA LLC FOR AN ORDER CONFIRMING RELINQUISHMENT OF ITS ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER DESIGNATION

Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(4) and 47 C.F.R. § 54.205, Frontier Communications of Georgia LLC ("Frontier") hereby provides the required "advance notice" that it is relinquishing its eligible telecommunications carrier ("ETC") designation effective September 1, 2026. Frontier respectfully requests that the Georgia Public Service Commission ("Commission") issue an order confirming Frontier's relinquishment of its ETC designation by July 1, 2026, in order to allow time for Frontier to provide sufficient notice to its current one single Lifeline customer. In support of this petition, Frontier provides the following information:

BACKGROUND

1. Frontier is an incumbent local exchange carrier ("incumbent LEC") in Georgia.

2. On October 2, 1997, pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(l), the Commission designated Frontier as an ETC in its Georgia incumbent LEC service area.[1] Frontier's Georgia incumbent LEC service area consists of the wire centers listed in Exhibit A.

[1]Order Granting Eligible Telecommunications Carrier Status Petition, *Petition of the Member Companies of the Georgia Telephone Association for Designation as Eligible Telecommunications Carriers*, Docket No. 7960-U (October 2, 1997).

3. Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1), ETCs are eligible to receive federal universal service support in accordance with 47 U.S.C. § 254, in exchange for which they are required to offer and advertise supported services pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.201(d) and meet the obligations associated with the universal service programs in which they participate. Federal universal service support includes "high-cost" support to deploy and maintain networks in rural and other high-cost areas, as well as Lifeline support for discounts provided to eligible low-income consumers.

4. With this petition, Frontier is providing notice that it is relinquishing its ETC designation for its entire Georgia service area effective September 1, 2026. Frontier is relinquishing its ETC designation because the underlying purpose of the designation – to enable the receipt of high-cost universal service support – no longer exists for Frontier in the state of Georgia. Frontier has not received any high-cost universal service support in Georgia since December 2021, when the FCC's Connect America Fund (CAF) program ended and was replaced by the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF). In the 2020 RDOF auction, the FCC awarded all high-cost support for the RDOF-eligible census blocks in Frontier's Georgia service area to other carriers.

5. There will be little or no consumer impact from Frontier's relinquishment of its ETC designation. Frontier currently has just <u>one</u> Lifeline customer in Georgia – a 94 percent decline from just five years ago – because most Lifeline-supported households have already chosen to obtain their Lifeline service from one of the many other ETCs that have been designated by the Commission.[2] The remaining Frontier Lifeline customer will be able to obtain Lifeline

[2] Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) disbursement data show that the number of Frontier Lifeline customers declined from 16 to one over the five years since April 2021. The rapid decline in the number of Frontier Lifeline customers is consistent with national trends: USAC data show that, for the nation as a whole, (1) incumbent LEC Lifeline disbursements fell 70 percent over the five years from 2020 to 2025; and (2) incumbent LEC ETCs now receive just 2 percent of Lifeline disbursements, while wireless ETCs receive 97 percent of Lifeline

service from one of the other ETCs or may instead elect to continue obtaining service from Frontier at standard rates, terms, and conditions. Frontier will provide its remaining Lifeline customer with ample notice of the changes in their Lifeline service, using the same notice timeline that the Commission approved when the AT&T incumbent LEC relinquished its ETC designation.

LEGAL STANDARD

6. In 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(4) and 47 C.F.R. § 54.205, Congress and the FCC made clear that state commissions "shall permit" an ETC to relinquish its ETC designation in any area served by "more than one" ETC. Specifically, 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(4) provides that:

> "A State commission . . . **shall permit an eligible telecommunications carrier to relinquish its designation** as such a carrier **in any area served by more than one eligible telecommunications carrier**. An eligible telecommunications carrier that seeks to relinquish its eligible telecommunications carrier designation for an area served by more than one eligible telecommunications carrier shall give advance notice to the State commission ... of such relinquishment." (Emphasis added).

7. As the Commission has recognized, 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(4) does not treat relinquishment by an incumbent LEC any differently than relinquishment by other designated ETCs. Consistent with 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(4), the Commission in 2017 and 2021 permitted the AT&T incumbent LEC to relinquish its Georgia ETC designation based on AT&T's demonstration that there was more than one ETC in AT&T's service area.[3]

FRONTIER IS ENTITLED TO RELINQUISH ITS ETC DESIGNATION

8. Frontier clearly meets the 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(4) "more than one ETC" standard

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disbursements. *See* https://www.usac.org/lifeline/resources/program-data/ ("Lifeline's Data and Statistics" file).

[3] Order Approving Partial Relinquishment of ETC Designation, *Application of BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. d/b/a AT&T Georgia for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier*, Docket No. 8259 (September 6, 2017) ("*AT&T 2017 Relinquishment Order*"); Order Approving Relinquishment of ETC Designation Throughout the State, *Application of BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. d/b/a AT&T Georgia for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier*, Docket No. 8259 (September 21, 2021) ("*AT&T 2021 Relinquishment Order*")..

for relinquishing its ETC designation. As is shown by Exhibit B, the Commission has designated at least 14 other ETCs in Frontier's Georgia service area.

9. Of the 14 carriers listed in Exhibit B, the Commission designated 13 carriers as ETCs on a statewide basis. The Commission recently expanded the designated service areas of those 13 ETCs to all 159 Georgia counties, provided that wireless reseller ETCs use AT&T, T-Mobile, or Verizon as their underlying carrier, because it found that "all three of the major wireless carriers provide near universal coverage in Georgia."[4] Because each of the 13 statewide ETCs has "near universal coverage" in Georgia, every Frontier wire center is served by multiple ETCs. In addition, some Frontier wire centers are also served by Windstream Communications (the other ETC listed in Exhibit B), which is a recipient of RDOF support. The Commission designated Windstream as an ETC in its RDOF-funded census blocks in Frontier wire centers.

10. Because every Frontier wire center is served by multiple statewide ETCs and some Frontier wire centers are also served by an RDOF ETC, 47 U.S.C. 214(e)(4) requires that the Commission permit Frontier to relinquish its ETC designation throughout its service area.

LIFELINE CUSTOMER NOTICES

11. As is noted above, Frontier currently has just one Lifeline customer in Georgia. To avoid customer confusion and assist with a smooth transition process, Frontier will stop enrolling customers in the Lifeline program after the Commission issues an order or on July 1, 2026, whichever is later. The Commission approved this approach, which will prevent a newly enrolled Lifeline customer from having to change to another Lifeline provider shortly after

[4] *Order Amending Eligible Telecommunications Carrier Designations*, Docket Nos. 44386, 39332, 32948, 31297, 35701, 33600, 25481, 40193, 38390, 21955, 36360, 55239, 26282 (November 22, 2024).

enrolling with Frontier, in the 2017 and 2021 AT&T relinquishment orders.

12. Because it is highly unlikely that any additional customers will enroll in Lifeline with Frontier before Frontier stops enrolling new Lifeline customers, Frontier will at most have to notify one customer of the change in Lifeline service. Frontier's remaining Lifeline customer will be able to obtain Lifeline service from one of the many other ETCs in Frontier's service area, including Frontier's Verizon Value affiliate (formerly TracFone), or may instead elect to continue obtaining service from Frontier at standard rates, terms, and conditions. If the remaining Lifeline customer elects to continue obtaining service from Frontier, Frontier will remove the Lifeline discount as of the relinquishment effective date.

13. After the Commission issues an order confirming relinquishment, Frontier will provide its remaining Lifeline customer with notice to select another ETC in order to continue receiving a Lifeline discount after the relinquishment effective date. Frontier will use the same notice timeline that the Commission approved in the 2017 and 2021 AT&T relinquishment orders. Specifically, at least 60 days prior to the relinquishment date, Frontier will notify its remaining Lifeline customer by mail that (1) Frontier will no longer offer the federal Lifeline discount; and (2) if the customer does not choose another provider, Frontier will continue to provide service at Frontier's standard prices (including applicable surcharges, fees and taxes) after the effective date of the relinquishment. Frontier will also send its remaining Lifeline customer a second notice letter at least 15 days prior to the relinquishment date. All notices will explain that Lifeline customers can obtain a list of other ETCs from the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), and that they may contact those other ETCs in order to discuss the available Lifeline benefits. Exhibit C provides sample language for the notices that Frontier will send to its remaining Lifeline

customer.

14. Frontier requests that the Commission issue an order granting this Petition as soon as possible, but no later than July 1, 2026, so that Frontier can provide sufficient notice to its Lifeline customer prior to the relinquishment effective date of September 1, 2026.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Frontier respectfully requests that the Commission grant this Petition expeditiously and issue an order confirming Frontier's relinquishment of its ETC designation in Georgia, effective September 1, 2026.

Respectfully submitted this the 20th day of May, 2026.

Frontier Communications of Georgia, LLC



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Exhibit A – Frontier Georgia Designated Wire Centers

Wire Center	Exchange
FAMTGAXA	FAIRMOUNT
RNGRGAXA	RANGER
RGSTGAXA	REGISTER
STBOGAXA	STATESBORO
STBOGAXB	STATESBORO - LANIER DRIVE

Exhibit B – ETCs Designated in Frontier Wire Centers

ETCs designated on a statewide basis by the Commission's November 5, 2024 Order

ETC	Docket
Air Voice Wireless, LLC	44386
American Broadband and Telecommunications Company	39332
AmeriMex Communications Corp.	32948
Assurance Wireless USA, L.P.	31297
Boomerang Wireless	35701
Global Connection, Inc. of America	33600
I-wireless, LLC	25481
IM Telecom, LLC	40193
Sage Telecom Communications, LLC	38390
Telrite Corporation	21955
Tempo Telecom, LLC	36360
Terracom Inc.	55239
Tracfone Wireless, Inc. (Verizon Value)	26282

RDOF ETC designated in Frontier wire centers

ETC	Designation Order
Windstream Communications	Docket No. 43847, May 27, 2021

Exhibit C – Sample Customer Notifications

First Customer Letter

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR LIFELINE DISCOUNT

Date

Customer Name
Address
City, State ZIP

Dear Valued Customer,

Reference Telephone Number: XXX-XX-XXXX Subscriber Name: XXXXXXX XXXXXXXXX

We will no longer provide a Lifeline discount in your area in Georgia through the Lifeline Program beginning xx/1/23. This change is due to our decision to no longer be an eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) in Georgia.

How does this impact you? While your voice service will not change, you will no longer receive the Lifeline discount on your monthly bill. In order to retain your Lifeline discount, you must contact another ETC service provider participating in the Lifeline Program. A list of those providers can be found at lifelinesupport.org/companies-near-me/ or you can call the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) at 800-234-9473.

If you have questions about this letter, please call us at **800-921-8101**

Sincerely,

Frontier Lifeline Services

Second Customer Letter

FINAL NOTICE: YOUR LIFELINE DISCOUNT

Date

Customer Name
Mailing Address
City, State Zip

Dear Valued Customer,

Reference Telephone Number: XXX-XX-XXXX Subscriber Name: XXXXXXX XXXXXXXXX

You were previously advised that we will no longer provide a Lifeline discount in your area in Georgia through the Lifeline Program beginning XXXX. This change is due to our decision to no longer be an eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) in Georgia.

How does this impact you? While your voice service will not change, you will no longer receive the Lifeline discount on your monthly bill. In order to retain your Lifeline discount, you must contact another ETC service provider participating in the Lifeline Program. A list of those providers can be found at lifelinesupport.org/companies-near-me/ or you can call Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) at 800-234-9473 If you have questions about this letter, please call us at 1-800-921-8101 to speak with a representative.

Sincerely,

Frontier Lifeline Services