

Exhibit 1

DECLARATION OF TRACFONE WIRELESS, INC.

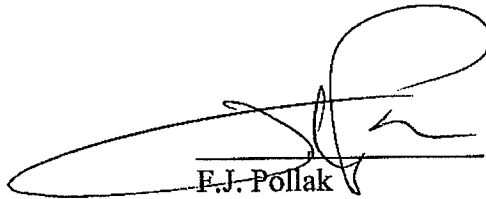
I, F.J. Pollak, state as follows:

1. I am President and Chief Executive Officer of TracFone Wireless, Inc. ("TracFone"). My business address is 9700 N.W. 112th Avenue, Miami, FL 33178.

2. In my capacity as President and Chief Executive Officer of TracFone, I am an authorized representative of TracFone. I have read TracFone's Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Missouri for the Limited Purpose of Offering Lifeline and Link Up Service to Qualified Households. I confirm that the information contained therein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

I certify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on March 6, 2009

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F.J. Pollak', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large loop on the right side and a long horizontal stroke on the left.

F.J. Pollak
President and Chief Executive Officer

Exhibit 2

Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of)	
)	
Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service)	CC Docket No. 96-45
)	
Petition of TracFone Wireless, Inc. for)	
Forbearance from 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1)(A) and 47)	
C.F.R. § 54.201(i))	

ORDER

Adopted: September 6, 2005

Released: September 8, 2005

By the Commission: Commissioner Abernathy issuing a statement.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In this Order, we address a petition filed by TracFone Wireless, Inc. (TracFone)¹ pursuant to section 10 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended by the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (the Act)² requesting that the Commission forbear from the requirement that a carrier designated as an eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) for purposes of federal universal service support provide services, at least in part, over its own facilities.³ TracFone requests that its eligibility for federal universal service support be limited to Lifeline only. Subject to the conditions that we describe below, we grant TracFone forbearance from the facilities requirement for ETC designation for Lifeline support only.⁴

II. BACKGROUND

2. Procedural History: TracFone is a non-facilities-based commercial mobile radio service (CMRS) provider (*i.e.*, a pure wireless reseller) that provides prepaid wireless telecommunications services. On June 8, 2004, TracFone filed a Petition for Forbearance from section 214(e) of the Act, which requires that an ETC offer service using its own facilities or a combination of its own facilities and resale of another carrier's services (Forbearance Petition or Petition).⁵ Contemporaneously with its Petition, TracFone filed

¹ TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Forbearance, CC Docket No. 96-45, filed June 8, 2004 (Forbearance Petition or Petition). On February 17, 2005, pursuant to section 10(c) of the Act, the Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) extended until September 6, 2005, the date on which TracFone's Petition shall be deemed granted in the absence of a Commission decision that the Petition fails to meet the standard for forbearance under section 10(a). *TracFone Wireless, Inc.'s Petition for Forbearance from 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1)(A) and 47 C.F.R. § 54.201(i)*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Order, 20 FCC Rcd 3677 (2005).

² Telecommunications Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-104, 110 Stat. 56 (1996).

³ 47 U.S.C. § 214(e).

⁴ We note that this grant of forbearance does not establish TracFone as an ETC. We will address TracFone's petitions for ETC designations in subsequent orders.

⁵ On June 24, 2004, the Bureau issued a Public Notice seeking comment on TracFone's Petition for Forbearance. *Parties are Invited to Comment on TracFone Wireless' Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of New York and Petition for Forbearance from Application of Section 214*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Public Notice, 19 FCC Rcd 11264 (2004). Comments and replies to the June 24th Public Notice were received

with the Commission petitions for ETC designation for several states.⁶ On August 8, 2004, TracFone, in its reply comments, and shortly thereafter in its applications for ETC designation, amended its Petition and related ETC applications to limit its eligibility for federal universal service support to the Lifeline portion of the low-income program.⁷ TracFone states that it will meet all ETC obligations except for the requirement to “own facilities” and commits to providing its Lifeline customers with access to E911 service, regardless of activation status and availability of prepaid minutes, and to requiring its customers to self-certify they are receiving only one Lifeline-supported service.⁸ On September 24, 2004, TracFone amended its Petition a second time to include a request for forbearance from section 54.201(i) of the Commission’s rules, which provides that state commissions shall not designate as an ETC a carrier that offers services supported by federal universal service support mechanisms exclusively through resale of another carrier’s service.⁹

3. Applicable Statutes and Rules: The Act provides that only an ETC shall be eligible for universal service support.¹⁰ To be eligible for ETC designation, a carrier must meet certain statutory requirements including offering service over its own facilities or a combination of its own facilities and resale of another

on July 26 and August 9, 2004, respectively. In response to certain comments, TracFone limited its Petition to Lifeline support in its August 9th reply comments. Because TracFone modified its Petition in its reply comments, commenters did not provide comment in the Forbearance proceeding on the Lifeline-only limitation. Despite this fact, commenters did address the Lifeline-only limitation in the related TracFone ETC proceedings, which TracFone likewise modified to reflect the request for limited universal service support. *See The Wireline Competition Bureau Seeks Comment on Petitions Concerning Eligible Telecommunications Designations and the Lifeline and Link-up Universal Service Support Mechanism*, CC Docket No. 96-45 and WC Docket No. 03-109, Public Notice, 19 FCC Rcd 20462 (2004).

⁶ TracFone has eight ETC petitions pending before the Commission. *See* TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of New York, CC Docket No. 96-45, filed June 8, 2004; TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the Commonwealth of Virginia, CC Docket No. 96-45, filed June 21, 2004; TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Florida, CC Docket No. 96-45, filed June 21, 2004; TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Connecticut, CC Docket No. 96-45, filed November 9, 2004; TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, CC Docket No. 96-45, filed November 9, 2004; TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Alabama, CC Docket No. 96-45, filed November 9, 2004; TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Tennessee, CC Docket No. 96-45, filed November 9, 2004; TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of North Carolina, CC Docket No. 96-45, filed November 9, 2004.

⁷ TracFone Reply Comments, filed August 9, at 2-3 (August Reply Comments). *See* TracFone Wireless, Inc. Amendment to Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Florida, CC Docket No. 96-45, filed Aug. 16, 2004; TracFone Wireless, Inc. Amendment to Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of New York, CC Docket No. 96-45, filed Aug. 16, 2004; TracFone Wireless, Inc. Amendment to Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the Commonwealth of Virginia, CC Docket No. 96-45, filed Aug. 16, 2004.

⁸ TracFone Reply Comments, filed October 4, 2004, at 3-4 (October Reply Comments); August Reply Comments at 10.

⁹ 47 C.F.R. § 54.201(i); TracFone Wireless, Inc. Clarification of Petition for Forbearance, CC Docket No. 96-45, filed September 24, 2004.

¹⁰ 47 U.S.C. § 254(e).

carrier's service.¹¹ Only ETCs may receive high-cost and low-income support.¹² The low-income support mechanism of the universal service fund consists of the Lifeline and Link-Up programs.¹³

4. Collectively, the Lifeline and Link-Up programs are designed to reduce the monthly cost of telecommunications service and the cost of initial connection, respectively, for qualifying consumers. Lifeline provides low-income consumers with discounts of up to \$10.00 off of the monthly cost of telephone service.¹⁴ Link-Up provides low-income consumers with discounts of up to \$30.00 off of the initial costs of installing telephone service.¹⁵ Recognizing the unique needs and characteristics of tribal communities, enhanced Lifeline and Link-Up provide qualifying low-income individuals living on tribal lands with up to \$25.00 in additional discounts off the monthly costs of telephone service and up to \$70.00 more off the initial costs of installing telephone service.¹⁶ TracFone seeks eligibility to receive support only for the Lifeline portion of the low-income program.¹⁷

¹¹ 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1)(A).

¹² A carrier need not be an ETC to participate in the schools and libraries or rural health care programs. 47 U.S.C. § 254(h)(1)(A) and (B)(ii). See *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Report and Order, 12 FCC Rcd 8776, 9015, para. 449 (1997 *Universal Service Order*) (concluding that any telecommunications carrier, not just ETCs, may receive universal service support for providing supported services to schools and libraries); see also *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, CC Docket No. 96-46, Fourteenth Order on Reconsideration, 14 FCC Rcd 20106, 20114-5, para. 19 (1999) (*Fourteenth Order on Reconsideration*) (finding that although only ETCs may receive universal service support, a non-ETC that provides supported services to eligible rural health care providers may offset the value of the discount provided against its universal service contribution obligation and, to the extent such discount exceeds its contribution obligation, receive a refund).

¹³ 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.401, 54.411.

¹⁴ See 47 C.F.R. § 54.401(a)(2).

¹⁵ See 47 C.F.R. § 54.411(a)(1).

¹⁶ See 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.405(a)(4), 54.411(a)(3). Under the Commission's rules, there are four tiers of federal Lifeline support. All eligible subscribers receive Tier 1 support which provides a discount equal to the ETC's subscriber line charge. Tier 2 support provides an additional \$1.75 per month in federal support, available if all relevant state regulatory authorities approve such a reduction. (All fifty states have approved this reduction.) Tier 3 of federal support provides one half of the subscriber's state Lifeline support, up to a maximum of \$1.75. Only subscribers residing in a state that has established its own Lifeline/Link-Up program may receive Tier 3 support, assuming that the ETC has all necessary approvals to pass on the full amount of this total support in discounts to subscribers. Tier 4 support provides eligible subscribers living on tribal lands up to an additional \$25 per month towards reducing basic local service rates, but this discount cannot bring the subscriber's cost for basic local service to less than \$1. See 47 C.F.R. § 54.403.

¹⁷ August Reply Comments at 3 (requesting eligibility for Lifeline only support); October Reply Comments at 4 (specifying it does not seek eligibility for Link-Up support). TracFone has filed details of two proposed Lifeline plans. TracFone Wireless, Inc. *Ex Parte* Supplement to Petition for Forbearance and Petitions for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier, CC Docket No. 96-45, at 3-5, filed July 15, 2005. The first plan, the "Pay-As-You-Go" Lifeline Plan, provides Lifeline customers with access to the network for one year and 30 minutes of airtime each month. Under TracFone's proposal, the cost of this plan would be completely subsidized by the Lifeline support. *Id.* at 3-4. The second plan, the "Net10 Pay-As-You-Go" Lifeline Plan, would require the Lifeline customer to purchase buckets of minutes to be used in an identified period of time that are discounted from TracFone's retail price to reflect the Lifeline subsidy. *Id.* at 4-5. One variation under this plan would require Lifeline customers to redeem coupons monthly. *Id.* TracFone states that, under any plan, the Administrator would provide support to TracFone as it does to all other recipients of Lifeline support; that is, TracFone's Lifeline support will be calculated on a monthly basis and distributed on a quarterly basis. Letter from Mitchell F. Brecher, Counsel for TracFone, to Marlene H. Dortch, FCC, CC Docket No. 96-45, at 3, filed August 22, 2005.

5. The Commission has in the past declined to extend ETC status to pure resellers. In the *1997 Universal Service Order*, the Commission found that the plain language of the statute requires that a carrier seeking ETC designation must own facilities, at least in part, thus precluding a carrier that offers services solely through resale from being designated as eligible.¹⁸ The Commission reasoned, without distinguishing among the various universal service support programs, that it was appropriate to deny pure resellers universal service support because pure resellers could receive the benefit of universal service support by purchasing wholesale services at a price that includes the universal service support received by the incumbent provider.¹⁹ Later in the *1997 Universal Service Order*, the Commission found that although resellers were not eligible to receive universal support directly, they were not precluded from offering Lifeline services. Resellers could offer Lifeline services by purchasing services at wholesale rates pursuant to section 251(c)(4) that reflect the customer-specific Lifeline support amount received by the incumbent local exchange company (LEC) and then passing these discounts through to qualifying low-income customers.²⁰ The Commission, in so finding, considered only that the underlying carrier was an incumbent LEC, subject to price-regulated resale obligations. Further, the Commission declined to forbear from the facilities requirement, finding that the statutory criteria had not been met.²¹ Making no finding with respect to the first two prongs, the Commission concluded that forbearance was not in the public interest because allowing pure resellers to receive universal service support would result in double recovery by the resellers.²² In making this finding, however, the Commission again did not distinguish among the various universal service support programs. Specifically, it did not consider whether providing only Lifeline support directly to a pure wireless reseller would result in double recovery.

III. DISCUSSION

6. For the reasons provided below, we conditionally grant TracFone's Petition and forbear from section 214(e) of the Act and sections 54.201(d)(1) and 54.201(i) of our rules for the purpose of considering its Petitions for ETC Designation for Lifeline support only.²³ If ultimately granted ETC status, TracFone will be eligible only for Lifeline support. As a limited ETC, TracFone would not be eligible to receive support for the other supported services under the low-income program nor would it be eligible, as an ETC, to receive support for services supported by the other universal support mechanisms.²⁴ We will address TracFone's petitions for ETC designation in subsequent orders. In sum, this grant is conditional on TracFone (a) providing its Lifeline customers with 911 and enhanced 911 (E911) access regardless of activation status and availability of prepaid minutes; (b) providing its Lifeline customers with E911-compliant handsets and replacing, at no additional charge to the customer, non-compliant handsets of existing customers who obtain Lifeline-supported service; (c) complying with conditions (a) and (b) as of the date it provides it provides Lifeline service; (d) obtaining a certification from each Public Safety

¹⁸ *Id.* at 8875, para. 178 (adopting Joint Board's analysis and conclusion); see *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Recommended Decision, 12 FCC Rcd 87, 172-73, paras. 160-161 (1996).

¹⁹ *1997 Universal Service Order*, 12 FCC Rcd at 8866, para. 161 and 8875, para. 178.

²⁰ *Id.* at 8972, para. 370. The Commission noted that it would reassess this approach in the future if the Lifeline program appeared to be under-utilized. *Id.*

²¹ *Id.* at 8875-6, para. 179.

²² *Id.*

²³ In addition, and on our own motion, we forbear from section 54.201(d)(1) of the Commission's rules. 47 C.F.R. § 54.201(d)(1). This section mirrors section 214(e) of the Act and requires that ETCs be facility-based, at least in part. We apply the same forbearance analysis we applied to section 214(e) to this section of our rules in determining that forbearance is warranted.

²⁴ See n. 16, *supra*, for discussion regarding participation by non-ETCs in the schools and libraries and rural health care programs.

Answering Point (PSAP) where TracFone provides Lifeline service confirming that TracFone complies with condition (a); (e) requiring its customers to self-certify at time of service activation and annually thereafter that they are the head of household and receive Lifeline-supported service only from TracFone; and (f) establishing safeguards to prevent its customers from receiving multiple TracFone Lifeline subsidies at the same address.²⁵ Finally, as explained below, within thirty days of the release of this Order, we require TracFone to file with the Commission a plan outlining the measures it will take to implement these conditions.

7. Section 10 of the Act requires that the Commission forbear from applying any regulation or any provision of the Act to telecommunications services or telecommunications carriers, or classes thereof, in any or some of its or their geographic markets, if the Commission determines that the three conditions set forth in section 10(a) are satisfied. Specifically, section 10(a) provides that the Commission shall forbear from applying such provision or regulation if the Commission determines that:

- (1) enforcement of such regulation or provision is not necessary to ensure that the charges, practices, classifications, or regulations by, for, or in connection with that telecommunications carrier or telecommunications service are just and reasonable and are not unjustly or unreasonably discriminatory;
- (2) enforcement of such regulation or provision is not necessary for the protection of consumers; and
- (3) forbearance from applying such provision or regulation is consistent with the public interest.²⁶

8. In addition, when considering the public interest prong under section 10(a)(3), the Commission must consider "whether forbearance ... will promote competitive market conditions."²⁷ If the Commission determines that such forbearance will promote competition among providers of telecommunications services, that determination may be the basis for a Commission finding that forbearance is in the public interest.²⁸ Forbearance is warranted, however, only if all three prongs of the test are satisfied. For the reasons explained below, we find that TracFone satisfies all three prongs.

9. This Petition requires that we consider the statutory goals of two related but different provisions of the Act. We first examine the statutory goals of universal service in section 254 specifically in the

²⁵ Commenters have raised concerns about the administrative costs, complexities, and burdens of granting this Petition and presumably the associated ETC designation petitions. See Letter from Robin E. Tuttle, USTelecom, to Marlene Dortch, FCC, CC Docket No. 96-45 (filed August 17, 2005) (USTelecom August 17 *Ex Parte*). We believe that this conditional forbearance will serve to further the statutory goal of the providing telecommunications access to low-income subscribers while establishing the necessary safeguards to protect the universal service fund and the functioning of the low-income support mechanism. To the extent, however, that our predictive judgment proves incorrect and these conditions prove to be inadequate safeguards, the parties can file appropriate petitions with the Commission and the Commission has the option of reconsidering this forbearance ruling. See *Petition for Forbearance of the Verizon Telephone Companies Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 160(c)*, WC Docket No. 01-338, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 19 FCC Rcd 21496, 21508-9, para. 26 n.85 (2004); see also *Petition of SBC Communications Inc. for Forbearance from Structural Separations Requirements of Section 272 of the Communications Act of 1934, As Amended, and Request for Relief to Provide International Directory Assistance Services*, CC Docket No. 97-172, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 19 FCC Rcd 5211, 5223-24, para. 19 n.66 (2004); *Cellnet Communications, Inc. v. FCC*, 149 F.3d 429, 442 (6th Cir. 1998). Additionally, we note that the conditions we impose here will be incorporated into any grant of the ETC designation petitions and any violation of such conditions may result in loss of ETC status.

²⁶ 47 U.S.C. § 160(a).

²⁷ 47 U.S.C. § 160(b).

²⁸ *Id.*

context of “low-income consumers.”²⁹ We then consider the statutory purpose underpinning the facilities requirement in section 214(e) as it relates to qualifying for federal low-income universal service support. After careful examination of the regulatory goals of universal service as applied to low-income consumers, we determine that a facilities requirement for ETC designation is not necessary to ensure that a pure wireless reseller’s charges, practices, classifications or regulations are just and reasonable when that carrier seeks such status solely for the purpose of providing Lifeline-supported services. Indeed, for the reasons provided below, we find that the facilities requirement impedes greater utilization of Lifeline-supported services provided by a pure wireless reseller.

10. Universal service has been a fundamental goal of federal telecommunications regulation since the passage of the Communications Act of 1934.³⁰ Congress renewed its concern for low-income consumers in the Telecommunications Act of 1996 when it established the principles that guide the advancement and preservation of universal service.³¹ Specifically, the Act directs the Commission to consider whether “consumers in all regions of the Nation, *including low-income consumers* and those in rural, insular, and high cost areas, ... have access to telecommunications [services] ... at rates that are reasonably comparable to rates charged ... in urban areas.”³² We therefore examine the facilities requirement from which TracFone seeks forbearance in light of the statute’s goal of providing low-income consumers with access to telecommunications services.

11. Just and Reasonable: As an initial matter, we note that a provision or regulation is “necessary” if there is a strong connection between the requirement and regulatory goal.³³ Section 10(a)(1) requires that we consider whether enforcement of the facilities-based requirement of section 214(e) for a pure wireless reseller that seeks ETC designation for Lifeline support only is necessary to ensure that the charges, practices, classifications or regulations are just and reasonable and not unjustly or unreasonably discriminatory.

12. We find that the facilities requirement is not necessary to ensure that TracFone’s charges, practices, and classifications are just and reasonable and not unjustly or unreasonably discriminatory where it is providing Lifeline service only. The Commission has in the past declined to extend ETC status to pure resellers because it was concerned about double recovery of universal service support.³⁴ In making this decision, however, the Commission considered the issue in the context of wireline resellers and without differentiating among the types of universal service support and the basis of distribution. Lifeline support, designed to reduce the monthly cost of telecommunications services for eligible consumers, is distributed on a per-customer basis and is directly reflected in the price that the eligible customer pays.³⁵ Because it is customer-specific, a carrier who loses a Lifeline customer to a reseller would no longer receive the Lifeline support to pass through to that customer. Thus, a wireless reseller who serves a Lifeline-eligible customer and receives Lifeline support directly from the fund does not receive a double recovery. By comparison, where the wholesale carrier is an incumbent LEC subject to price-regulated resale under section 251(c)(4), the rate at which the reseller obtains the wholesale service is based on a state-mandated percentage

²⁹ 47 U.S.C. § 254(b)(3).

³⁰ 47 U.S.C. § 151 (“to make available, so far as possible, to all the people of the United States ... a rapid, efficient, Nation-wide, and world-wide wire and communication service with adequate facilities at reasonable rates”) (emphasis added).

³¹ 47 U.S.C. § 254(b); see *1997 Universal Service Order*, 12 FCC Rcd at 8789, para. 21 and 8793, para. 27.

³² 47 U.S.C. § 254(b)(3) (emphasis added).

³³ See *CTIA v. FCC*, 330 F.3d 502, 512 (2003).

³⁴ *1997 Universal Service Order*, 12 FCC Rcd at 8861, 8873, 8875, paras. 151-152, 174, and 178.

³⁵ 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.401, 54.504.

discount off of the incumbent LEC's retail rate for the service, and any Lifeline support received by the incumbent LEC would therefore be reflected in the price charged to the reseller.³⁶ In this scenario, a reseller that also received Lifeline support could recover twice: first because the benefit of the Lifeline support is reflected in the wholesale price and second because the reseller also receives payment directly from the fund for the Lifeline customer. That, however, is not the case before us. TracFone, as a CMRS provider, does not purchase Lifeline-supported services from incumbent LEC providers. Because TracFone's CMRS wholesale providers are not subject to section 251(c)(4) resale obligations, the resold services do not reflect a reduction in price due to Lifeline support. Therefore, we find that allowing TracFone to receive Lifeline support directly from the fund would not result in double recovery to TracFone and that the logic of the 1997 *Universal Service Order* does not apply here.

13. We agree with TracFone that, as a reseller, it is by definition subject to competition and that this competition ensures that its rates are just and reasonable and not unjustly or unreasonably discriminatory.³⁷ We note that TracFone's Lifeline offering will compete with at least one other Lifeline offering whether from the underlying CMRS provider, if an ETC, or from the incumbent wireline carrier.³⁸ We also believe that this competition will spur innovation amongst carriers in their Lifeline offerings, expanding the choice of Lifeline products for eligible consumers. We note that TracFone has created a wireless prepaid product that is neither dependent upon the retail service offerings of its underlying carriers nor simply a rebranding of the underlying carrier's retail service offering which may provide a valuable alternative to eligible consumers.³⁹

14. For the reasons provided above, we find that the requirements of the first prong of section 10(a) are met. Where, as here, the wireless reseller is forgoing all universal service support but Lifeline, which is customer-specific and is designed to make telecommunication service affordable to eligible consumers, the facilities requirement is unnecessary to preserve the integrity of the universal service program or the fund. By limiting TracFone's eligibility to Lifeline support, the facilities requirement is not necessary to ensure that TracFone's charges, practices, and classifications are just and reasonable.

15. Consumer Protection: Section 10(a)(2) requires that we consider whether enforcement of the facilities-based requirement of section 214(e) for a pure wireless reseller that seeks ETC designation only for Lifeline support is necessary for the protection of consumers. We find that imposing a facilities requirement on a pure wireless reseller is not necessary for the protection of consumers subject to the conditions described below. Specifically, we conclude that forbearance from this provision will actually benefit consumers. Indeed, if TracFone is ultimately granted limited ETC status, it would be offering Lifeline-eligible consumers a choice of providers not available to such consumers today for accessing telecommunications services. The prepaid feature may be an attractive alternative for such consumers who need the mobility, security, and convenience of a wireless phone but who are concerned about usage charges or long-term contracts. We also note that TracFone has committed to ensuring that all of its consumers will be able to place enhanced 911 (E911) calls from their handsets even if the consumer's service is not active or does not have prepaid minutes available.⁴⁰

³⁶ See 47 C.F.R. § 251(c)(4).

³⁷ Forbearance Petition at 5.

³⁸ See 47 C.F.R. § 54.405(a) (requiring ETCs to offer Lifeline service).

³⁹ TracFone states that its customers pay in advance for minutes of use, without term contracts or termination fees, other extraneous or pass-through fees, credit checks, or deposits. TracFone also states that its pricing is uniform across its service areas despite the costs associated with any particular underlying carrier. Forbearance Petition at 3-4.

⁴⁰ August Reply Comments at 10.

16. Given the importance of public safety, we condition this grant of forbearance on TracFone's compliance with the E911 requirements applicable to wireless resellers, as modified below, for all Lifeline customers. In light of the condition discussed below, that TracFone ensure its customers receive only one Lifeline-supported service, we find it essential that TracFone's Lifeline-supported service be capable of providing emergency access. Given the possibility that this Lifeline-supported service will be the customers' only means of accessing emergency personnel, we require that TracFone provide its Lifeline customers with access to basic and E911 service immediately upon activation of service.⁴¹ We note that this condition is consistent with TracFone's representation that its Lifeline customers will be able to make emergency calls at any time.⁴² To demonstrate compliance with this condition, TracFone must obtain a certification from each PSAP where it provides Lifeline service confirming that TracFone provides its customers with access to basic and E911 service. TracFone must furnish copies of these certifications to the Commission upon request.⁴³ As an additional condition, TracFone must provide only E911-compliant handsets to its Lifeline customers, and must replace any non-compliant handset of an existing customer that obtains Lifeline-supported service with an E911-compliant handset, at no charge to the customer. The Commission has an obligation to promote "safety of life and property" and to "encourage and facilitate the prompt deployment throughout the United States of a seamless, ubiquitous, and reliable end-to-end infrastructure" for public safety.⁴⁴ The provision of 911 and E911 services is critical to our nation's ability to respond to a host of crises, and this Commission has a longstanding and continuing commitment to a nationwide communications system that promotes the safety and welfare of all Americans, including Lifeline customers.⁴⁵ We believe that these conditions are necessary to ensure that TracFone's Lifeline customers have meaningful access to emergency services. We reiterate that, with the possibility that the Lifeline service will be the customer's only access to emergency services and given the potential gravity of harm if such Lifeline customers cannot obtain such access, we believe that these conditions will further the protection of such Lifeline customers.

17. We are not persuaded by some commenters' concerns regarding the impact on the size of the universal service fund and the associated contribution obligation if we grant this Petition.⁴⁶ Because section 10(a)(2) requires that we consider the welfare of all "consumers," we must consider the effect a grant of this Petition will have on consumers who will likely shoulder the effects of any increased contribution obligation since carriers are permitted to recover their contribution obligations from

⁴¹ Under section 20.18(m) of our rules, wireless resellers have an independent obligation, beginning December 31, 2006, to provide access to basic and E911 service, to the extent that the underlying facilities-based licensee has deployed the facilities necessary to deliver E911 information to the appropriate PSAP. 47 C.F.R. § 20.18(m). Section 20.18(m) further provides that resellers have an independent obligation to ensure that all handsets or other devices offered to their customers for voice communications are location-capable. *Id.* Under our rules, this obligation applies only to new handsets sold after December 31, 2006. *Id.* As a condition of this grant of forbearance, however, we require that TracFone, if granted ETC status, meet the requirements of section 20.18(m) for all of its Lifeline customers as of the date it provides such Lifeline service.

⁴² August Reply Comments at 10 (given E911 capabilities of its service and handsets, TracFone envisions that its service "really will serve as a 'lifeline' for those eligible customers participating in the program").

⁴³ We recognize that, as a practical matter, if TracFone's underlying facilities-based licensee has not deployed the facilities necessary to deliver E911 information to the appropriate PSAP, TracFone will not be able to offer Lifeline-supported service to customers residing in that area.

⁴⁴ *Applications of Nextel Communications, Inc. and Sprint Corporation For Consent to Transfer Control of Licenses and Authorizations*, WT Docket No. 05-63, Memorandum and Order, FCC 05-148, para. 144 (rel. August 8, 2005).

⁴⁵ *Id.*

⁴⁶ *See, e.g.*, Comments of TDS Telecommunications Corp., filed September 20, 2004, at 5-6 (TDS Comments).

customers.⁴⁷ If TracFone is able to obtain ETC designation for Lifeline-only services, we do not expect this to significantly burden the universal service fund and thus negatively affect consumers through increased pass-through charges of the carriers' contribution obligations. The Commission has recognized the potential growth of the fund associated with high-cost support distributed to competitive ETCs.⁴⁸ TracFone, however, would not be eligible for high-cost support. In 2004, low-income support accounted for only 14 percent of the distribution of the total universal service fund; whereas, high-cost support accounted for 64.2 percent.⁴⁹ Any increase in the size of the fund would be minimal and is outweighed by the benefit of increasing eligible participation in the Lifeline program, furthering the statutory goal of providing access to low-income consumers. Significantly, granting TracFone's Petition will not have any effect on the number of persons eligible for Lifeline support.

18. We further safeguard the fund by imposing additional conditions on this grant of forbearance. Specifically, as a further condition of this grant of forbearance and in addition to all other required certifications under the program, we require that TracFone require its Lifeline customers to self-certify under penalty of perjury upon service activation and then annually thereafter that they are the head of household and only receive Lifeline-supported service from TracFone.⁵⁰ The penalties for perjury must be clearly stated on the certification form. Additionally, in order to further strengthen the head of household requirement, we require that TracFone track its Lifeline customer's primary residential address and prohibit more than one supported TracFone service at each residential address.⁵¹ These conditions are consistent with TracFone's representations in the record.⁵² In light of these safeguards, we are not dissuaded from granting forbearance by concerns of double recovery relating to customers receiving Lifeline support for more than one service.⁵³ We recognize, however, that the potential for more than one

⁴⁷ See 47 C.F.R. § 54.712.

⁴⁸ See *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Virginia Cellular, LLC Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the Commonwealth of Virginia*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 19 FCC Rcd 1563, 1577, para. 31 (2004); see also *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Highland Cellular, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the Commonwealth of Virginia*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 19 FCC Rcd 6422, 6433-4, para. 25 (2004).

⁴⁹ Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, *Trends in Telephone Service*, Table 19.1 and Chart 19.1 (June 2005). As of March 2004, the average monthly federal support per non-tribal Lifeline customer was \$8.55. *Id.* at Table 19.7. See 47 C.F.R. § 54.403. Tribal customers are eligible for up to an additional \$25 per month in Lifeline support. 47 C.F.R. § 54.403(a)(4).

⁵⁰ October Reply Comments at 3-4 (commitment to require Lifeline customers to self-certify that they do not receive support from any other carrier). To monitor compliance, we require that TracFone maintain the self-certifications and provide such documentation to the Commission upon request.

⁵¹ See Reply Comments of TracFone Wireless, Inc. to Petition for ETC Designation in Virginia, filed September 7, 2004, at 7-8 (fully capable of fulfilling all record keeping requirements and has the ability to track each consumer's primary residence). See also Letter from Mitchell F. Brecher, Counsel for TracFone, to Marlene H. Dortch, FCC, CC Docket No. 96-45, filed July 13, 2005 (capable of fulfilling certification and verification requirements) (TracFone July 13 *Ex Parte*).

⁵² See n.56 and n.57 above. We point out that these conditions are in addition to, and do not supplant, the certification and verification eligibility already required by our rules for federal default states and any similar state rules for the non-federal default states. See, e.g., 47 C.F.R. § 54.410 (requiring initial certification and annual verification of eligibility).

⁵³ See TDS Comments at 5-6; Reply Comments of the United State Telecom Association, filed October 4, 2004, at 6 and n.18; letter from Katherine O'Hara, Verizon, to Marlene H. Dortch, FCC, CC Docket No. 96-45, at 1, filed August 9, 2005 (Verizon *Ex Parte*); USTelecom August 17 *Ex Parte* at 4.

Lifeline-supported service per eligible consumer is an industry-wide problem.⁵⁴ We are confident that these conditions of this grant of forbearance will eliminate this concern with respect to TracFone's customers. Additionally, we encourage comment on this issue in the *Comprehensive Universal Services Program Management* proceeding to address the potential for abuse throughout the industry.⁵⁵

19. USTelecom raised concerns about the fact that TracFone distributes its service through retail outlets.⁵⁶ USTelecom argues that TracFone will not have the requisite control over the retailer's employees to ensure compliance with Lifeline rules and certifications. We recognize that this may be a problem and thus require that TracFone distribute its Lifeline service directly to its Lifeline customers. Specifically, customers may purchase handsets at TracFone's retail outlets, however, we require that TracFone deal directly with the customer to certify and verify the customer's Lifeline eligibility. Of the two methods for certifying and verifying customer eligibility offered by TracFone, we reject the point of sale procedures that would allow TracFone Lifeline customers to submit qualifying information to the retail vendor.⁵⁷ TracFone must have direct contact with the customer, whether by telephone, fax, Internet, in-person consultation or otherwise, when establishing initial and continued eligibility.

20. Certain commenters argue that the prepaid, resold nature of TracFone's proposed service offering will facilitate fraud, waste, and abuse in the Lifeline program.⁵⁸ We find that this concern is more properly addressed in any order resolving TracFone's petitions for designation as an ETC. In the ETC designation proceedings, if TracFone's petitions are granted, we will address how Lifeline support will be calculated and distributed if the prepaid nature of TracFone's service offering requires such clarification.

21. In light of the conditions we have outlined here, we believe that appropriate safeguards are in place to deter waste, fraud, and abuse. We strive to balance our objective of increasing participation in the low-income program with our objective of preventing and deterring waste, fraud, and abuse. We find that we have struck the appropriate balance here. We are also mindful of the fact that other prepaid pure wireless carriers may similarly seek eligibility for Lifeline-only support. Given the safeguards we put in place aimed at ensuring that only eligible consumers receive such support and that they receive such support only once, we do not believe that similar requests will have a detrimental impact on the fund. We note that to the extent any similarly situated prepaid wireless reseller seeks forbearance from these requirements for the purpose of providing only Lifeline support, it will be expected to comply with all the conditions we impose upon TracFone herein.

22. Accordingly, we find that, subject to the 911 and E911 conditions and the self-certification and address limitation conditions set out above, the ETC facilities-based requirement is not necessary for consumer protection. We thus conclude that the second prong of section 10(a) is satisfied.

23. Public Interest: Section 10(a)(3) requires that we consider whether enforcement of the facilities-based requirement of section 214(e) for a pure wireless reseller that seeks ETC designation for Lifeline

⁵⁴ See Verizon *Ex Parte* at 1; USTelecom August 17 *Ex Parte* at 2, 4.

⁵⁵ See *Comprehensive Review of Universal Service Fund Management, Administration, and Oversight, Federal State Joint Board on Universal Service, Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Mechanism, Rural Health Care Support Mechanism, Lifeline and Link-Up, Changes to the Board of Directors for the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc.*, WC Docket Nos. 05-195, 02-60, 03-109 and CC Docket Nos. 96-45, 97-21, FCC 05-124, para. 22 (rel. June 14, 2005) (*Comprehensive Universal Services Program Management*).

⁵⁶ See USTelecom August 17 *Ex Parte* at 4.

⁵⁷ TracFone July 13 *Ex Parte* at 2-3.

⁵⁸ Letter from Jeffrey S. Lanning, USTelecom, to Marlene H. Dortch, FCC, CC Docket No. 96-45, at 3-5, filed August 26, 2005; Reply Comments of Verizon, filed October 4, 2004, at 3.

support only is in the public interest. In this instance, based on the record before us, we find that the statutory goal of providing telecommunications access to low-income consumers outweighs the requirement that TracFone own facilities, where TracFone, should it be designated an ETC, will be eligible only for Lifeline support. Thus, we find that requiring TracFone, as a wireless reseller, to own facilities does not necessarily further the statutory goals of the low-income program, which is to provide support to qualifying low-income consumers throughout the nation, regardless of where they live.

24. The Lifeline program is designed to reduce the monthly cost of telecommunications service for qualifying low-income consumers.⁵⁹ Presently only about one-third of households eligible for low-income assistance actually subscribe to the program.⁶⁰ We recently expanded eligibility criteria and outreach guidelines for federal default states in an effort to increase participation.⁶¹ On July 26, 2005, we launched a joint initiative with the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners to raise awareness of our Lifeline and Link-Up programs among low-income consumers.⁶² We believe even more can be done to further expand participation to those subscribers that qualify and thus further the statutory goal of section 254(b). Therefore, consistent with the Commission's assertion in the *1997 Universal Service Order* concerning under-utilization of the program, we conclude it is appropriate to consider the relief requested with the goal of expanding eligible participation in the program.⁶³ With only about one-third of Lifeline-eligible households actually subscribing, we believe that granting TracFone's Petition serves the public interest in that it should expand participation of qualifying consumers. Accordingly, we conclude that forbearing from the facilities requirement for Lifeline support only, subject to the conditions set forth above satisfies the requirements of section 10(a)(3).

25. Within thirty days of this release of this Order, we require that TracFone file with the Commission a plan outlining the measures it will take to implement the conditions outlined in this Order. This plan will be placed on public notice and will be considered by the Commission in TracFone's ETC designation proceedings. For the foregoing reasons and subject to the conditions above, we find that the third prong of section 10(a) is satisfied.

26. Finally, we reject USTelecom's argument that TracFone has not requested forbearance from the facilities requirement in section 254(e) and that without such forbearance TracFone cannot fulfill the obligations of an ETC. Specifically, section 254(e) requires that "a carrier that receives such support shall use that support only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended."⁶⁴ USTelecom emphasizes that the words "facilities" and "services" are joined by the conjunctive article "and" and therefore an ETC must use any universal support received for facilities as well as services.⁶⁵ We disagree with USTelecom's interpretation. First, we read this provision together with the sentence that precedes it. The preceding sentence states that only an ETC "shall be eligible to receive *specific* Federal universal service support."⁶⁶ The next sentence, which USTelecom quotes, then

⁵⁹ 47 C.F.R. § 54.401.

⁶⁰ *Lifeline and Link-Up*, WC Docket No. 03-109, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 19 FCC Rcd 8302, 8305, para. 1 and Appendix K at Table I.B.

⁶¹ *Id.* at 8305, para 1.

⁶² *FCC and NARUC Launch "Lifeline Across America" to Raise Awareness of Lifeline and Link-Up Programs*, News Release, July 26, 2005.

⁶³ *1997 Universal Service Order*, 12 FCC Rcd at 8972, para. 370.

⁶⁴ 47 U.S.C. § 254(e).

⁶⁵ USTelecom August 17 *Ex Parte* at 5 n.1.

⁶⁶ 47 U.S.C. § 254(e) (emphasis added).

requires that “*such service*”, which we find refers to the specific universal support from the previous sentence, be used only for purposes “for which the support is intended.” Reading these sentences together in their entirety, we find that Congress intended that a carrier must use the universal support received to meet the goals of the specific support mechanism under which it was distributed. For example, a carrier who receives specific Lifeline support must use that support to reduce the price of access to telecommunications services for the eligible customer. Second, we note that not all the nominalized verbs in the sentence quoted by USTelecom, “provision,” “maintenance,” and “upgrading,” can be read to apply to both facilities and services. What for example would it mean to “maintain” a “service” apart from the “facilities”? We also note that the nominalized verbs themselves are joined by the conjunctive article “and”. Therefore, extending USTelecom’s logic, any universal support received by a carrier must always be used for the provision, maintenance, *and* upgrading of *both* facilities and services. The terms maintenance and upgrading as generally associated with a carrier’s network and not with service itself. Thus, USTelecom’s reading of section 254(e) would require us to interpret the term “service” as surplusage – a result that must be avoided when the statute admits to other interpretations.⁶⁷ We find the more appropriate reading is to consider these terms in the disjunctive. Thus, we conclude that an ETC receiving Lifeline support uses this specific universal service support for the purposes for which it was intended when it reduces the price of the Lifeline service by the amount of the support.

IV. ORDERING CLAUSE

27. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED THAT, pursuant to sections 4(i), 10, 214, and 254 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. §§ 154(i), 160, 214, and 254, the Petition for Forbearance filed by TracFone Wireless, Inc. on June 8, 2004, and amended on August 9, 2004 and September 24, 2004, IS GRANTED subject to the conditions set forth above and, on our own motion, we forbear from enforcing 47 C.F.R. § 54.201(1)(d).

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary

⁶⁷ See, e.g., *TRW Inc. v. Andrews*, 534 U.S. 19, 31 (2001); *Duncan v. Walker*, 533 U.S. 167, 174 (2001).

Exhibit 3

Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of)
)
Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service) CC Docket No. 96-45
)
TracFone Wireless, Inc.)
)
Petition for Designation as an Eligible)
Telecommunications Carrier in the State of New)
York)
)
Petition for Designation as an Eligible)
Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Florida)
)
Petition for Designation as an Eligible)
Telecommunications Carrier in the)
Commonwealth of Virginia)
)
Petition for Designation as an Eligible)
Telecommunications Carrier in the State of)
Connecticut)
)
Petition for Designation as an Eligible)
Telecommunications Carrier in the)
Commonwealth of Massachusetts)
)
Petition for Designation as an Eligible)
Telecommunications Carrier in the State of)
Alabama)
)
Petition for Designation as an Eligible)
Telecommunications Carrier in the State of North)
Carolina)
)
Petition for Designation as an Eligible)
Telecommunications Carrier in the State of)
Tennessee)
)
Petition for Designation as an Eligible)
Telecommunications Carrier in the State of)
Delaware for the Limited Purpose of Offering)
Lifeline Service to Qualified Households)
)
Petition for Designation as an Eligible)
Telecommunications Carrier in the State of New)
Hampshire for the Limited Purpose of Offering)
Lifeline Service to Qualified Households)
)
Petition for Designation as an Eligible)
Telecommunications Carrier in the)
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the Limited)

Purpose of Offering Lifeline Service to Qualified)
 Households)
)
 Petition for Designation as an Eligible)
 Telecommunications Carrier in the District of)
 Columbia for the Limited Purpose of Offering)
 Lifeline Service to Qualified Households)

ORDER

Adopted: April 9, 2008

Released: April 11, 2008

By the Commission: Commissioners Copps, Adelstein and Tate issuing separate statements.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In this Order, we conditionally grant the petitions of TracFone Wireless, Inc. (TracFone) to be designated as an eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC), eligible only to receive universal service Lifeline support, in its licensed service areas in New York, Virginia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Alabama, North Carolina, Tennessee, Delaware, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia, pursuant to section 214(e)(6) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended (the Act).¹ Due

¹ TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of New York, CC Docket No. 96-45 (filed June 8, 2004) (New York Petition); TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the Commonwealth of Virginia, CC Docket No. 96-45 (filed July 21, 2004) (Virginia Petition); TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Connecticut, CC Docket No. 96-45 (filed Nov. 9, 2004) (Connecticut Petition); TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, CC Docket No. 96-45 (filed Nov. 9, 2004) (Massachusetts Petition); TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Alabama, CC Docket No. 96-45 (filed Nov. 9, 2004) (Alabama Petition); TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of North Carolina, CC Docket No. 96-45 (filed Nov. 9, 2004) (North Carolina Petition); TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Tennessee, CC Docket No. 96-45 (filed Nov. 9, 2004) (Tennessee Petition); TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Delaware for the Limited Purpose of Offering Lifeline Service to Qualified Households, CC Docket No. 96-45 (filed Nov. 28, 2007) (Delaware Petition); TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of New Hampshire for the Limited Purpose of Offering Lifeline Service to Qualified Households, CC Docket No. 96-45 (filed Nov. 28, 2007) (New Hampshire Petition); TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the Limited Purpose of Offering Lifeline Service to Qualified Households, CC Docket No. 96-45 (filed Dec. 11, 2007) (Pennsylvania Petition); TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the District of Columbia for the Limited Purpose of Offering Lifeline Service to Qualified Households, CC Docket No. 96-45 (filed Jan. 18, 2008) (District of Columbia Petition). TracFone filed an erratum to its New York Petition correcting, from four to five, the number of underlying carriers it uses to serve subscribers in that state. Erratum to TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of New York, CC Docket No. 96-45 (filed June 14, 2004). TracFone later amended its request for ETC designation in New York and Virginia to limit its eligibility for federal universal service support to the Lifeline program only. Amendment to TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of New York, CC Docket No. 96-45, 2 (filed Aug. 16, 2004); Amendment to TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the Commonwealth of Virginia, CC Docket No. 96-45, 2 (filed Aug. 16, 2004). TracFone's petitions for ETC designation in the remaining states, other than Florida, as discussed below, were limited to eligibility for Lifeline support as originally filed. TracFone does not seek eligibility for high-cost support.

to the Florida Public Service Commission's assertion of jurisdiction over wireless ETC designations, we dismiss without prejudice TracFone's petition for designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier in Florida.² On September 8, 2005, the Commission conditionally granted TracFone's petition for forbearance from the facilities requirement of section 214(e)(1).³ As discussed below, we now conclude that TracFone has satisfied the remaining eligibility requirements of section 214(e)(1) and the Commission's rules to be designated as an ETC eligible only for Lifeline support (limited ETC).⁴ We also approve TracFone's plan for complying with the conditions imposed in the *Forbearance Order*.⁵

II. BACKGROUND

A. The Act

2. Section 254(e) of the Act provides that "only an eligible telecommunications carrier designated under section 214(e) shall be eligible to receive specific Federal universal service support."⁶ Pursuant to section 214(e)(1), a common carrier designated as an ETC must offer and advertise the services supported by the federal universal service mechanisms throughout the designated service area.⁷

3. Section 214(e)(2) of the Act gives state commissions the primary responsibility for performing ETC designations.⁸ Section 214(e)(6) directs the Commission, upon request, to designate as an ETC "a common carrier providing telephone exchange service and exchange access that is not subject to the jurisdiction of a State commission."⁹ Under section 214(e)(6), the Commission may, with respect to an area served by a rural telephone company, and shall, in all other cases, designate more than one common carrier as an ETC for a designated service area, consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity, so long as the requesting carrier meets the requirements of section 214(e)(1).¹⁰ Before

² TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Florida, CC Docket No. 96-45 (filed July 21, 2004) (Florida Petition). TracFone later amended its request for ETC designation in Florida to limit its eligibility for federal universal service support to the Lifeline program only. Amendment to TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Florida, CC Docket No. 96-45, 2 (filed Aug. 16, 2004); see para. 10 *infra* (discussing jurisdiction of the Florida Public Service Commission).

³ *Petition of TracFone Wireless, Inc. for Forbearance from 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1)(A) and 47 C.F.R. § 54.201(i)*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Order, 20 FCC Rcd 15095 (2005) (*Forbearance Order*). Under section 214(e)(1)(A) of the Act, an ETC must offer service using its own facilities or a combination of its own facilities and resale of another carrier's service. 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1)(A).

⁴ Lifeline is the universal service low-income program that provides discounts to qualified low-income consumers on their monthly telephone bills. See 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.401-54.409.

⁵ *Petition of TracFone Wireless, Inc. for Forbearance from 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1)(A) and 47 C.F.R. § 54.201(i)*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Compliance Plan (filed Oct. 11, 2005) (TracFone Compliance Plan); *Petition of TracFone Wireless, Inc. for Forbearance from 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1)(A) and 47 C.F.R. § 54.201(i)*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Erratum to Compliance Plan (filed Oct. 17, 2005) (Erratum to Compliance Plan) (correcting its characterization of Florida to identify it as a state with state-imposed certification and verification requirements for Lifeline eligibility).

⁶ 47 U.S.C. § 254(e).

⁷ 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1); see also 47 C.F.R. § 54.201(d).

⁸ 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(2); see *Promoting Deployment and Subscriberhip in Unserved Areas, Including Tribal and Insular Areas*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Twelfth Report and Order, Memorandum Opinion and Order, and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 15 FCC Rcd 12208, 12255, para. 93 (2000) (*Twelfth Report and Order*).

⁹ 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(6).

¹⁰ *Id.*

designating an additional ETC for an area served by a rural telephone company, the Commission must determine that the designation is in the public interest.¹¹

B. Commission Requirements for ETC Designation

4. An ETC petition must contain the following: (1) a certification and brief statement of supporting facts demonstrating that the petitioner is not subject to the jurisdiction of a state commission; (2) a certification that the petitioner offers or intends to offer all services designated for support by the Commission pursuant to section 254(c) of the Act; (3) a certification that the petitioner offers or intends to offer the supported services "either using its own facilities or a combination of its own facilities and resale of another carrier's services;" (4) a description of how the petitioner "advertise[s] the availability of the [supported] services and the charges therefore using media of general distribution;" and (5) if the petitioner meets the definition of a "rural telephone company" under section 3(37) of the Act, the identity of its study area, or, if the petitioner is not a "rural telephone company," a detailed description of the geographic service area for which it requests an ETC designation from the Commission.¹²

5. In the *ETC Designation Order*, the Commission adopted additional requirements for ETC designation proceedings in which the Commission acts pursuant to section 214(e)(6) of the Act.¹³ Specifically, consistent with the recommendation of the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, the Commission found that an ETC applicant must demonstrate: (1) a commitment and ability to provide services, including providing service to all customers within its proposed service area; (2) how it will remain functional in emergency situations; (3) that it will satisfy consumer protection and service quality standards; (4) that it offers local usage comparable to that offered by the incumbent LEC; and (5) an understanding that it may be required to provide equal access if all other ETCs in the designated service area relinquish their designations pursuant to section 214(e)(4) of the Act.¹⁴ These additional requirements are mandatory for all ETCs designated by the Commission.¹⁵ ETCs already designated by the Commission or ETC applicants that submitted applications prior to the effective date of the *ETC Designation Order* must make such showings in their annual certification filings.¹⁶

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² See *Procedures for FCC Designation of Eligible Telecommunications Carriers Pursuant to Section 214(e)(6) of the Communications Act*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Public Notice, 12 FCC Rcd 22947, 22948 (1997) (*Section 214(e)(6) Public Notice*).

¹³ See *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Report and Order, 20 FCC Rcd 6371 (2005) (*ETC Designation Order*); see also *Virginia Cellular, LLC Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier for the Commonwealth of Virginia*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 19 FCC Rcd 1563, 1564, 1565, 1575-76, 1584-85, paras. 1, 4, 27, 28, 46 (2004) (*Virginia Cellular Order*); *Highland Cellular, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier for the Commonwealth of Virginia*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 19 FCC Rcd 6422, 6438, paras. 1, 33 (2004) (*Highland Cellular Order*).

¹⁴ See *ETC Designation Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 6380, para. 20 (citing *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Recommended Decision, 19 FCC Rcd 4259, para. 5 (Fed-State Jt. Bd. 2004)).

¹⁵ 47 C.F.R. § 54.202(a). Because TracFone is a pure reseller eligible for Lifeline support only, we do not require TracFone to demonstrate that it satisfies the network build-out and improvement requirements or to provide a certification that it acknowledges that the Commission may require it to provide equal access to long distance carriers in the event that no other eligible telecommunications carrier is providing equal access within the service area.

¹⁶ 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.202(b); 54.209.

6. In addition, prior to designating an ETC pursuant to section 214(e)(6) of the Act, the Commission determines whether such designation is in the public interest.¹⁷ In the *ETC Designation Order*, the Commission adopted one set of criteria for evaluating the public interest for ETC designations for both rural and non-rural areas.¹⁸ Specifically, in determining the public interest, the benefits of increased consumer choice and the unique advantages and disadvantages of the applicant's service offering are considered.¹⁹ As the Commission noted in the *ETC Designation Order*, however, the same factors may be analyzed differently or may warrant a different outcome depending on the specifics of the proposed service area and whether it is rural or non-rural.²⁰

C. TracFone's Petitions

7. TracFone is a non-facilities-based commercial mobile radio service (CMRS) provider that offers prepaid wireless telecommunications services.²¹ On June 8, 2004, TracFone filed a petition seeking forbearance from section 214(e)(1) of the Act, which requires that an ETC be facilities-based, at least in part.²² Beginning on that date, TracFone filed with the Commission petitions seeking designation as an ETC only for the purpose of being eligible to receive universal service Lifeline support in its licensed service areas in New York, Virginia, Florida, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Alabama, North Carolina, Tennessee, Delaware, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia.²³

8. In the *Forbearance Order*, the Commission conditionally granted TracFone's request for forbearance from the facilities-based requirements of section 214(e)(1)(A) of the Act and section 54.201(i) of its rules for the purpose of considering TracFone's petitions for limited ETC designation.²⁴ The *Forbearance Order* required that TracFone file a compliance plan with the Commission explaining how TracFone will implement the conditions imposed by the *Forbearance Order*.²⁵ TracFone filed its compliance plan on October 11, 2005.²⁶

¹⁷ 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(6); 47 C.F.R. § 54.202(c). See also *ETC Designation Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 6388-96, paras. 40-57; *Virginia Cellular Order*, 19 FCC Rcd at 1575, para. 27; *Highland Cellular Order*, 19 FCC Rcd at 6431-32, para. 21. The Commission places the burden on the ETC applicant to demonstrate that the public interest is served. *ETC Designation Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 6390, para. 44.

¹⁸ *ETC Designation Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 6389-90, paras. 42-43.

¹⁹ 47 C.F.R. § 54.202(c).

²⁰ *ETC Designation Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 6390, para. 43. In analyzing the public interest factors in this instance, there is no rural/non-rural distinction because Lifeline support, unlike high-cost support, is not determined based on whether the service area is rural or non-rural. See 47 C.F.R. § 54.403.

²¹ See, e.g., Massachusetts Petition at 2, 3.

²² 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1).

²³ See *supra* notes 1 and 2.

²⁴ *Forbearance Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 15098-99, para. 6. Additionally, on its own motion, the Commission forbore from section 54.201(d)(1) of its rules, which mirrors section 214(e) of the Act, requiring that ETCs be facilities-based, at least in part. *Id.* at 15098, n.23.

²⁵ *Id.* at 15105, para. 25.

²⁶ See generally TracFone Compliance Plan; Erratum to Compliance Plan.

III. DISCUSSION

A. Commission Authority to Perform the ETC Designation

9. TracFone has demonstrated that, except for the Florida Public Service Commission, the relevant state commissions lack authority to perform the requested limited ETC designations, and the Commission has authority to consider TracFone's petitions under section 214(e)(6) of the Act. Each petition includes an affirmative statement from the relevant state commission providing that ETC designation should be sought from the Commission.²⁷ Accordingly, we find the relevant state commissions lack jurisdiction to designate TracFone as an ETC and that this Commission therefore has authority to perform the requested limited ETC designations under section 214(e)(6).²⁸

10. In April of this year, the Florida Public Service Commission found that, due to a change in Florida state law, it "now ha[s] jurisdiction to consider CMRS applications for ETC designation."²⁹ In light of this development, and because section 214(e)(2) of the Act gives state commissions the primary responsibility for performing ETC designations, we dismiss without prejudice the petition filed by TracFone seeking designation as an ETC in Florida. TracFone may re-file its petition with the Florida Public Service Commission. Should the Florida Public Service Commission consider granting a petition by TracFone for designation as a limited ETC in Florida, we would encourage it to require TracFone to adhere to the compliance plan we approve herein.

B. Analysis of the Eligibility Requirements

11. Offering the Services Designated for Support. TracFone has demonstrated, through the required certifications and related filings, that it now offers or will offer upon designation as a limited ETC the services supported by the Lifeline program.³⁰

12. Offering the Supported Services Using a Carrier's Own Facilities. The Commission previously granted TracFone forbearance from the facilities requirement for purposes of this limited ETC designation, permitting TracFone to offer the supported services via resale only.³¹

13. Advertising the Supported Services. TracFone has demonstrated that it satisfies the requirement of section 214(e)(1)(B) to advertise the availability of the supported services and the related charges "using media of general distribution."³² TracFone has also stated that, in compliance with the

²⁷ E.g., New York Petition at 4 and Exhibit 2.

²⁸ 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(6).

²⁹ *Petition of Alltel Communications, Inc. for Designation as Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) in Certain Rural Telephone Company Study Areas Located Partially in Alltel's Licensed Area and for Redefinition of those Study Areas*, PSC-07-0288-PAA-TP, Notice of Proposed Agency Action Order Finding Authority to Consider Applications By CMRS Providers For ETC Designation, 2007 WL 1029436 (Fla. P.S.C. Apr. 3, 2007). The April order was a proposed agency action, which was made final by a consummating order on June 7, 2007. See *Petition of Alltel Communications, Inc. for Designation as Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) in Certain Rural Telephone Company Study Areas Located Partially in Alltel's Licensed Area and for Redefinition of those Study Areas*, PSC-07-0481A-CO-TP, Amendatory Order, 2007 WL 1774614 (Fla. P.S.C. June 7, 2007).

³⁰ 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.410(a), 54.101(a)(1)-(a)(9); see, e.g., New York Petition at 5-8. In particular, we disagree with commenters who argued that TracFone cannot offer toll limitation service. See, e.g., TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of New York, CC Docket No. 96-45, Comments of TDS Telecommunications Corp., at 9-11 (filed July 26, 2004). We find that the prepaid nature of TracFone's service offering works as an effective toll control. See *infra* para. 15.

³¹ *Forbearance Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 15098, para. 6.

³² 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1)(B); see, e.g., New York Petition at 8.

Commission's Lifeline rules, it will advertise the availability of Lifeline service in a manner reasonably designed to reach those likely to qualify for those services.³³

14. Additional Eligibility Requirements. TracFone either satisfies the applicable eligibility requirements set forth in the *ETC Designation Order*, described above,³⁴ or must make such showings in its first annual report under section 54.209 of the Commission's rules.³⁵

C. Public Interest Analysis

15. We find that TracFone's universal service Lifeline offering will provide a variety of benefits to Lifeline-eligible consumers including increased consumer choice,³⁶ high-quality service offerings,³⁷ and mobility.³⁸ In addition, the prepaid feature, which essentially functions as a toll control feature, may be an attractive alternative to Lifeline-eligible consumers who are concerned about usage charges or long-term contracts. The Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate and the National Emergency Numbers Association Keystone Chapter assert, however, that TracFone is not complying with Pennsylvania's Public Safety Emergency Telephone Act (the Pennsylvania Act), which requires that wireless providers collect a wireless E911 surcharge and remit the money to Pennsylvania's Wireless E-911 Emergency Fund.³⁹ The National Emergency Numbers Association (NENA) further asserts that TracFone's actions in Pennsylvania reflect "patterns of behavior" evidenced "in several other states."⁴⁰ TracFone's reply asserts, *inter alia*, that the allegations set forth in the NENA Keystone/PAOCA Joint Comments are not relevant to TracFone's qualifications to be designated as an ETC and are a question of

³³ 47 C.F.R. § 54.405(b); *see, e.g.*, Petitions for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Connecticut and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, CC Docket No. 96-45, Reply Comments of TracFone Wireless, Inc., at 10 (filed Dec. 29, 2004).

³⁴ *See supra* para. 5.

³⁵ *ETC Designation Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 6380, para. 20; 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.202(a), 54.209. For example, TracFone has committed to provide high-quality service, as demonstrated by committing to comply with the Consumer Code for Wireless Service of the Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association (CTIA), and to serve the designated areas within a reasonable time. *See, e.g.*, New York Petition at 13-14. Because TracFone is a pure reseller, eligible for universal service Lifeline support only, we do not require it to demonstrate that it satisfies the network build-out and improvement requirements, or to provide a certification that it acknowledges that the Commission may require it to provide equal access to long distance carriers in the event that no other eligible telecommunications carrier is providing equal access within the service area.

³⁶ For example, TracFone's universal service offering will provide benefits to customers in situations where they do not have access to a wireline telephone. *See, e.g.*, New York Petition at 12, 14.

³⁷ For example, TracFone committed that it will comply with the Consumer Code for Wireless Service of the CTIA. *See, e.g.*, New York Petition at 13.

³⁸ *See e.g.*, New York Petition at 10-14. As noted in the *PSC Alabama Order*, the mobility of telecommunications assists consumers in rural areas who often must drive significant distances to places of employment, stores, schools, and other locations. *Public Service Cellular, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the States of Georgia and Alabama*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Order, 20 FCC Rcd 6854, 6861, para. 25 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2005) (*PSC Alabama Order*). Moreover, the availability of a wireless universal service offering also provides access to emergency services that can mitigate the unique risks of geographic isolation associated with living in rural communities. *Id.*

³⁹ TracFone Wireless, Inc. Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Joint Comments of the Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate and the National Emergency Numbers Association, Keystone Chapter, CC Docket No. 96-45, 5-6 (filed Feb. 8, 2008) (NENA Keystone/PAOCA Joint Comments).

⁴⁰ *See* Letter from James R. Hobson, Counsel for the National Emergency Numbers Association, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, CC Docket No. 96-45, 1-3 (filed Apr. 3, 2007) (NENA Apr. 3, 2008 *Ex Parte* Letter).

state law, not commission regulation.⁴¹ TracFone further denies that it is in violation of the Pennsylvania Act, and asserts that the larger question of state 911 funding requirements is more appropriately addressed "at the national level."⁴²

16. We disagree with TracFone and find compliance with 911/E911 requirements relevant to the public interest in this instance. In the *Forbearance Order*, the Commission expressly conditioned its grant of forbearance from the facilities requirement of section 214(e) of the Act on TracFone's compliance with E911 requirements applicable to wireless resellers.⁴³ The Commission adopted these conditions because of the unique circumstances presented by TracFone's petitions for limited ETC designation for Lifeline support.⁴⁴ The Commission further required TracFone to submit a plan outlining measures to implement the conditions imposed in the *Forbearance Order*, and stated the Commission would consider the plan in deciding whether to grant TracFone's petitions for limited ETC designation.⁴⁵ Given these circumstances, and in light of the concerns raised by NENA and the Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate, we condition TracFone's designation as an ETC eligible for Lifeline support in each state on TracFone's certification that it is in full compliance with any applicable 911/E911 obligations, including obligations relating to the provision, and support, of 911 and E911 service.⁴⁶ Subject to this condition, we find, on balance, that the advantages of designating TracFone as a limited ETC in the designated service areas outweigh any potential disadvantages.⁴⁷

D. Designated Service Areas

17. Based on the foregoing, we hereby designate TracFone as a limited ETC, eligible only for Lifeline support, in its licensed service areas in New York, Virginia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Alabama, North Carolina, Tennessee, Delaware, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia.⁴⁸ In designating TracFone as a limited ETC, we clarify that TracFone's designated service areas do not encompass federally-recognized tribally-owned lands.⁴⁹

⁴¹ Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Reply Comments of TracFone Wireless, Inc., CC Docket No. 96-45, 2-5 (filed Feb. 25, 2008).

⁴² *Id.* at 5-9.

⁴³ See *Forbearance Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 15102, para 16; *infra* at paras. 20-22.

⁴⁴ See *Forbearance Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 15102, para 16. The Commission noted that TracFone's Lifeline-supported service may well be the customers' only means of accessing emergency personnel. *Id.* Given the potential gravity of the harm if TracFone's Lifeline customers cannot obtain access to emergency services, the Commission adopted the conditions to protect Lifeline customers. *Id.*

⁴⁵ *Id.* at 15105, para. 25.

⁴⁶ See NENA Keystone/PAOCA Joint Comments; NENA Apr. 3, 2008 *Ex Parte* Letter.

⁴⁷ The Commission has already found that any effect on the universal service fund would be minimal, limited to the Lifeline program, and outweighed by the benefit of increasing eligible participation in the Lifeline program. *Forbearance Order*, 20 FCC Rcd 15103-04, para. 17. In addition, we need not perform a creamskimming analysis because TracFone is seeking to be eligible for Lifeline support only.

⁴⁸ Under this limited ETC designation, TracFone will not be eligible for support for Link Up or toll-limitation service under the low-income program, nor will it be eligible for high-cost support, or for schools and libraries and rural health care support as an ETC. Non-ETCs, however, may participate in certain aspects of the schools and libraries or rural health care programs. See *Forbearance Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 15097, para. 3 & n.12.

⁴⁹ TracFone expressly states that it does not request ETC designation for tribal lands. Petitions for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the States of Alabama, North Carolina, and Tennessee, CC Docket No. 96-45, Reply Comments of TracFone Wireless, Inc., at n.22 (filed Feb. 2, 2005).

E. Regulatory Oversight and Compliance Plan

18. Under section 254(e) of the Act, TracFone is required to use the specific universal service support it receives "only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended."⁵⁰ An ETC receiving Lifeline support uses that support as intended when it reduces the price of its telecommunications services by the amount of the support for the eligible consumer.⁵¹ Lifeline assistance shall be made available to qualifying low-income consumers as soon as the universal service fund Administrator certifies that TracFone's Lifeline service offering satisfies the criteria in our rules and complies with the conditions imposed under the *Forbearance Order*.⁵² In addition, TracFone must report certain information to the Commission and the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) pursuant to section 54.209 of the Commission's rules.⁵³

19. We find that reliance on TracFone's commitments to meet these requirements is reasonable and consistent with the public interest and the Act and the Fifth Circuit decision in *Texas Office of Public Utility Counsel v. FCC*.⁵⁴ These requirements will further the Commission's goal of ensuring that TracFone satisfies its obligation under section 214(e) of the Act to provide the services supported by the Lifeline program throughout its designated service areas.

20. In addition, we note that, in the *Forbearance Order*, the Commission imposed additional requirements on TracFone, and ordered that TracFone file a compliance plan detailing how it will adhere to these requirements. The additional requirements obligate TracFone to implement certain 911 and E911 requirements and to establish certain administrative procedures to safeguard against waste, fraud, and abuse in the Lifeline program.

21. Specifically, the Commission conditioned forbearance from the facilities requirement for limited ETC designation upon TracFone: (a) providing its Lifeline customers with 911 and enhanced 911 (E911) access regardless of activation status and availability of prepaid minutes; (b) providing its Lifeline customers with E911-compliant handsets and replacing, at no additional charge to the customer, non-compliant handsets of existing customers who obtain Lifeline-supported service; (c) complying with conditions (a) and (b) as of the date it provides Lifeline service; (d) obtaining a certification from each Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) where TracFone provides Lifeline service confirming that TracFone complies with condition (a); (e) requiring its customers to self-certify at time of service

⁵⁰ 47 U.S.C. § 254(e). Because TracFone is not eligible to receive high-cost support, we do not require it to provide high-cost certifications under §§ 54.313 and 54.314 of our rules. See 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.313, 54.314.

⁵¹ See *Forbearance Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 15105-06, para. 26.

⁵² See 47 C.F.R. § 54.401(d). As noted above, we find that TracFone's service offering meets the criteria for service and functionality contained in our rules. See *supra* para. 11 & n.29. We also approve TracFone's compliance plan, finding that it is adequate to implement the conditions of the *Forbearance Order*. See *infra* para. 21.

⁵³ See 47 C.F.R. § 54.209(a) (specifying the information to be included in the annual reports submitted by ETCs); *ETC Designation Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 6400-6402, paras. 68-69; see also *Virginia Cellular Order*, 19 FCC Rcd at 1584, para. 46 & n.140 (anticipating that annual submissions will encompass only the ETC's designated service areas). As noted above, as a pure reseller eligible for Lifeline support only, we do not require TracFone to report on network build-out and improvements or to certify that it acknowledges that the Commission may require it to provide equal access to long distance carriers in the event that no other eligible telecommunications carrier is providing equal access within the service area. See *supra* note 15.

⁵⁴ In *TOPUC*, the Fifth Circuit held that that nothing in section 214(e)(2) of the Act prohibits states from imposing additional eligibility conditions on ETCs as part of their designation process. See *Texas Office of Public Utility Counsel v. FCC*, 183 F.3d 393, 417-18 (5th Cir. 1999) (*TOPUC*). Consistent with this holding, we find that nothing in section 214(e)(6) prohibits the Commission from imposing additional conditions on ETCs when such designations fall under our jurisdiction.

activation and annually thereafter that they are the head of household and receive Lifeline-supported service only from TracFone; and (f) establishing safeguards to prevent its customers from receiving multiple TracFone Lifeline subsidies at the same address.⁵⁵

22. The Commission carefully crafted the conditions of the *Forbearance Order* to meet important regulatory goals. We decline, therefore, to modify these conditions as requested by TracFone in granting the ETC designation requests at issue herein.⁵⁶ Consequently, TracFone must obtain the required certification from each PSAP where it will provide Lifeline service.⁵⁷ Moreover, TracFone must continue to provide access to “basic and enhanced 911 service” as described in section 20.18(m) of our rules.⁵⁸ Finally, TracFone must “distribute its Lifeline service directly to its Lifeline customers.”⁵⁹

23. After careful review of the compliance plan and the record, we find the compliance plan adequate to implement the original and unmodified conditions of the *Forbearance Order*.⁶⁰ We, therefore, approve the compliance plan as discussed in this Order.

⁵⁵ *Forbearance Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 15098-99, para. 6.

⁵⁶ In its compliance plan, TracFone requests two modifications to the public safety conditions. First, TracFone requests that, in lieu of obtaining certification from each PSAP confirming access to 911 and E911, that it be permitted to rely on the underlying carrier's current quarterly E911 report filed with the Commission together with a certification from TracFone that its Lifeline customers in the relevant market will be served only by such carrier(s). TracFone Compliance Plan at 7-10. Second, TracFone requests that it be allowed to offer Lifeline service where either 911 or E911 service is available. *Id.* at 11-14. Further, TracFone states in its applications that it will implement, upon designation as an ETC, the Lifeline certification and verification procedures set forth in an *ex parte* presentation dated July 13, 2005. *See, e.g.*, Delaware Petition at 12; District of Columbia Petition at 12-13; Letter from Mitchell F. Brecher, Counsel for TracFone, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, WC Docket 96-45, Attach. (July 13, 2005). TracFone does not explicitly note, however, that the procedures set forth in that document were rejected, in part, in the *Forbearance Order*. *See Forbearance Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 15104, para. 19; District of Columbia Public Service Commission Reply Comments, CC Docket No. 96-45, at 4-5 (filed Mar. 13, 2008) (District of Columbia Reply). Out of an abundance of caution, we treat this omission as a request for modification of the conditions of the *Forbearance Order*.

⁵⁷ *See Forbearance Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 15102, para. 16. We believe this requirement is sufficient to address the District of Columbia Public Service Commission's concern that the District of Columbia Office of Unified Communications be notified that TracFone is providing Lifeline service in the District of Columbia. *See District of Columbia Reply* at 4.

⁵⁸ 47 U.S.C. § 20.18(m) (emphasis added). We also note that CMRS providers are required to “transmit all wireless 911 calls without respect to their call validation process. . . .” *See* 47 C.F.R. § 20.18(b). This rule addresses the concerns of the District of Columbia Public Service Commission regarding the 911 capability of TracFone handsets “regardless of activation status or minute availability.” *See District of Columbia Reply* at 3; *Revision of the Commission's Rules to Ensure Compatibility with Enhanced 911 Emergency Calling Systems*, CC Docket No. 94-102, RM-8143, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 11 FCC Rcd 18676, 18691-99, paras. 29-46 (1996).

⁵⁹ *Forbearance Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 15104, para. 19.

⁶⁰ In particular, we disagree with USTelecom, who questions whether TracFone will receive 12 months of Lifeline support if a subscriber who chooses the annual prepaid plan uses all of the initial minutes in the first month or if a subscriber under the “NET10” plan redeems fewer than 12 monthly coupons. *See Petition of TracFone Wireless, Inc. for Forbearance* from 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1)(A) and 47 C.F.R. § 54.201(i), CC Docket No. 96-45, Comments of the United States Telecom Association, at 3, 4 (filed Nov. 28, 2005) (USTelecom Compliance Plan Comments). We find that TracFone's plans for seeking reimbursement are consistent with our Lifeline rules and procedures. *Petition of TracFone Wireless, Inc. for Forbearance* from 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1)(A) and 47 C.F.R. § 54.201(i), CC Docket No. 96-45, Reply Comments of TracFone Wireless, Inc., at 6, 7 (filed Dec. 12, 2005). Moreover, despite comments to the contrary, we are satisfied that TracFone will pass through all Lifeline support as required by our rules. *See USTelecom Compliance Plan Comments* at 1-2. Finally, we find that we do not need to clarify how Lifeline support

(continued...)

24. Finally, we note that the Commission may institute an inquiry on its own motion to examine any ETC's records and documentation to ensure that the universal service support an ETC receives is being used for the purpose for which it was intended.⁶¹ TracFone will be required to provide such records and documentation to the Commission and USAC upon request. If TracFone fails to fulfill the requirements of the Act, our rules, the terms of this Order, or the conditions imposed under the *Forbearance Order* after it begins receiving universal service Lifeline support, the Commission may revoke its limited ETC designation.⁶² The Commission may also assess forfeitures for violations of its rules and orders.⁶³

IV. ANTI-DRUG ABUSE ACT CERTIFICATION

25. Under section 5301 of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988, no applicant is eligible for any new, modified, or renewed instrument of authorization from the Commission, including authorizations issued under section 214 of the Act, unless the applicant certifies that neither it, nor any party to its application, is subject to a denial of federal benefits, including Commission benefits.⁶⁴ TracFone has provided a certification consistent with the requirements of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988.⁶⁵ We find that TracFone has satisfied the requirements of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988, as codified in sections 1.2001-1.2003 of the Commission's rules.⁶⁶

V. ORDERING CLAUSES

26. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED that, pursuant to the authority contained in section 214(e)(6) of the Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(6), TracFone Wireless, Inc. IS DESIGNATED AN ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER eligible only for Lifeline support in its licensed

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will be calculated and distributed because we are confident that USAC is capable of handling any administrative issues presented by TracFone's Lifeline offering. *See Forbearance Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 15104, para. 20 (stating that the ETC designation order would address how Lifeline support will be calculated and distributed if the prepaid nature of the offering requires such clarification). The *Forbearance Order* also addressed the issue of double recovery, noting that, although the Commission has in the past declined to extend ETC status to pure resellers due to concerns about double recovery of universal service support, TracFone's CMRS wholesale providers are not subject to section 251(c)(4) wholesale obligations and so the resold services presumably do not reflect a reduction in price due to Lifeline support. *See id.* at 15100-01, para. 12. We, therefore, dismiss comments to the contrary. *See, e.g., Comments of Verizon, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, TracFone Wireless Inc., Petition for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of New York, Petition for Forbearance from Application of Section 214, CC Docket No. 96-45 at 9 (filed July 26, 2004).*

⁶¹ 47 U.S.C. §§ 220, 403.

⁶² *See Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Western Wireless Corporation Petition for Preemption of an Order of the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Declaratory Ruling, 15 FCC Rcd 15168, 15174, para. 15 (2000); 47 U.S.C. § 254(e); *see also Forbearance Order*, 20 FCC Rcd at 15099, para. 6, n.25.

⁶³ *See* 47 U.S.C. § 503(b).

⁶⁴ 21 U.S.C. § 862; 47 C.F.R. § 1.2002(a)-(b). Section 1.2002(b) provides that a "party to the application" shall include: "(1) If the applicant is an individual, that individual; (2) If the applicant is a corporation or unincorporated association, all officers, directors, or persons holding 5% or more of the outstanding stock or shares (voting and/or nonvoting) of the petitioner; and (3) If the application is a partnership, all non-limited partners and any limited partners holding a 5% or more interest in the partnership." 47 C.F.R. § 1.2002(b). *See Section 214(e)(6) Public Notice*, 12 FCC Rcd at 22949.

⁶⁵ *See e.g., New York Petition at Exhibit 1.*

⁶⁶ 47 C.F.R. §§ 1.2001-2003.

service areas in New York, Virginia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Alabama, Tennessee, Delaware, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia to the extent described in this Order and subject to the conditions set forth herein.

27. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, pursuant to the authority contained in section 214(e)(6) of the Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(6), TracFone Wireless, Inc.'s petition for eligible telecommunications carrier designation in the state of Florida IS DISMISSED WITHOUT PREJUDICE to the extent described herein.

28. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that TracFone Wireless, Inc. WILL SUBMIT additional information pursuant to section 54.209 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 54.209, no later than October 1, 2008, as part of its annual reporting requirements.

29. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, pursuant to section 1.103 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.103, this Order SHALL BE effective upon release.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary