

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

In the Matter of the Application of Assurance Home     )  
Phone Services, Inc., d/b/a Surety Wireless for        )  
Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications         )  
Carrier on a Wireless Basis (Low Income Only)         )     **File No. RA-2011-0298**

**ORDER GRANTING APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION  
AS AN ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER**

Issue Date: November 15, 2011

Effective Date: November 25, 2011

**Syllabus:** The Missouri Public Service Commission grants eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) status to Assurance Home Phone Service, Inc. d/b/a Surety Wireless for the purpose of receiving low-income customer support.

**Background**

On March 23, 2011, Assurance Home Phone Service, Inc. d/b/a Surety Wireless filed an application with the Commission seeking designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in order to receive federal universal service support for low income customers through Lifeline and LinkUp programs. Surety Wireless is a mobile wireless company whose operations are not regulated by the Missouri Public Service Commission. Through this application, the company intends to provide a free wireless handset, 100 minutes of monthly usage and 100 text messages with no monthly fees to qualifying customers throughout a number of service areas in Missouri.<sup>1</sup>

On March 24, the Commission issued notice of the application and set an intervention deadline of April 8. There were no requests to intervene. After a number of

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<sup>1</sup> The service areas are listed in Attachment B to the application.

amendments to the company's application, the Staff of the Commission filed its recommendation on October 31. Staff recommends that the Commission approve the application.

## **Discussion**

This matter is within this Commission's jurisdiction.<sup>2</sup> Because no party objects to the company's application, no evidentiary hearing is required.<sup>3</sup> Rights to a hearing are therefore waived.<sup>4</sup> Based on the verified filings, the Commission finds and concludes as follows.

Surety Wireless is a Florida corporation authorized to do business in Missouri. Surety Wireless is a mobile wireless carrier whose operations are not regulated by the Commission.

The federal Universal Service Fund was established in the Telecommunications Act of 1996. The purpose of the fund is to ensure that people in rural and high cost areas, as well as low-income customers, have access to quality telecommunications services at reasonable rates.<sup>5</sup> To meet that goal, the Universal Service Fund redistributes money paid into the fund by telecommunications customers to telecommunications providers who serve rural and high cost parts of the country. Before a telecommunications service provider is eligible to receive funding from the Universal Service Fund, it must be designated as an Eligible Telecommunications Company.

The Commission finds the averments in the company's application, with all of the supplement amendments, and Staff's Memorandum and Recommendation to be true. The

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<sup>2</sup> 47 U.S.C. §214(e)(2).

<sup>3</sup> *State ex rel. Deffenderfer, Inc. v Public Service Com'n*, 776 S.W.2d 494 (Mo. App. 1989).

<sup>4</sup> Section 536.060, RSMo 2000.

<sup>5</sup> 47 U.S.C. §254(b).

Commission must grant ETC status to Surety Wireless if the company offers the service set out in Section 254 of the Act and if it advertises the availability of those services using media of general distribution.<sup>6</sup> The Commission finds that Surety Wireless has met those requirements and will therefore designate Surety Wireless as an eligible telecommunications carrier.

**THE COMMISSION ORDERS THAT:**

1. Assurance Home Phone Service, Inc. d/b/a Surety Wireless is designated as an eligible telecommunications carrier, throughout the service areas listed in Attachment B to the application, to receive low-income federal universal service fund support.
2. This order shall become effective on November 25, 2011.
3. This file shall be closed on November 26, 2011.

**BY THE COMMISSION**



Steven C. Reed  
Secretary

( S E A L )

Kennard L. Jones, Senior Regulatory  
Law Judge, by delegation of authority  
pursuant to Section 386.240, RSMo.

Dated at Jefferson City, Missouri,  
on this 15th day of November, 2011.

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<sup>6</sup> 47 U.S.C. §214(e)(1), (2).