

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

In the Matter of the Application	)	
Missouri RSA No. 7 Limited Partnership	)	
d/b/a Mid-Missouri Cellular for	)	
Designation as a Telecommunications	)	Case No. TO-2003-0531
Carrier Eligible for Federal Universal	)	
Service Support Pursuant to Section 254	)	
of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.	)	

**STATEMENT OF POSITION OF  
ALMA AND CITIZENS TELEPHONE COMPANIES**

Comes now Alma Telephone Company (Alma) and Citizens Telephone Company of Higginsville, Missouri (Citizens) and for their statement of position regarding the issue to be decided in this case state to the Missouri Public Service Commission (Commission) as follows:

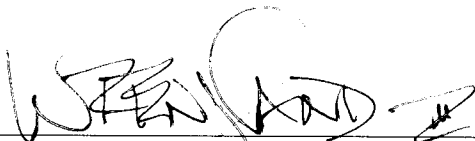
**Issue:** Mid-Missouri Cellular seeks designation by the Commission as an eligible telecommunications carrier (“ETC”), eligible to receive Federal universal service support. Before designating an additional ETC for an area served by a rural telephone company, the Commission must find that the designation is in the public interest pursuant to Section 214 of the Telecommunications Act and Section 54.201©) of the FCC’s Rules. Is granting ETC status to Mid-Missouri Cellular in the Public Interest?”

**Alma and Citizens’ Position:** No. The granting of ETC status to Mid-Missouri Cellular (MMC) is not in the public interest because, among other things,:

1. The granting of ETC status to MMC will neither increase nor enhance competition since competition from MMC and other CMRS providers is already a reality without the need for Universal Service Funding;
2. MMC has failed to demonstrate that granting ETC designation in the identified rural areas will enhance Universal Service or the principles of Universal Service as outlined in the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (Act) and by the FCC;

3. The granting of ETC status to MMC will not provide end-user customers any Universal Service benefits that they do not currently have; and
4. The granting of ETC status to MMC in view of the substantially different regulatory requirements imposed on incumbents (such as rate regulation, quality of service requirements, billing practice requirements, and annual USF certification) would not comport with the competitively neutral principle of Universal Service.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attorneys for Alma and Citizens  
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing has been mailed, hand-delivered, transmitted by facsimile or electronically mailed to all counsel of record this 21<sup>st</sup> day of January, 2004.

