

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

In the Matter of the	)	
Petition of United Fiber, LLC	)	Case No. _____
For Expanded Designation as An Eligible	)	
Telecommunications Carrier Pursuant to	)	
Section 214(e)(2) of the Communications	)	
Act of 1934, as Amended	)	

**PETITION FOR EXPANDED DESIGNATION AS AN
ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER**

COMES NOW United Fiber, LLC (“Petitioner” or “United Fiber”), pursuant to § 214(e)(2) of the Communications Act of 1934 (“Act”), as amended, and the rules and regulations of the Missouri Public Service Commission (“Commission”), including 20 CSR 4240-31.016 to respectfully request expanded Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (“ETC”) designation to participate in the federal Universal Service Fund’s (“USF”) High-Cost and Lifeline programs in all areas where United Fiber is seeking, jointly with TurboNet Technologies, Inc. (“TurboNet Technologies”), the approval of the Federal Communications Commission to assign certain Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (“RDOF”) Phase I-funded census blocks and related RDOF funding and broadband and voice service obligations from TurboNet Technologies to United Fiber, as well as Lifeline-only ETC designation in certain additional areas.¹ In addition, United Fiber seeks Commission authority to participate in the Missouri Universal Service Fund

¹ The Commission previously designated Petitioner’s predecessor corporate entity, United Services, Inc., as a high-cost and low-income ETC in the State of Missouri where the Petitioner was allocated federal Connect America Fund Phase II (“CAF II”) and RDOF funding. *See* Application of United Services, Inc. for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Missouri, Docket No. RA-2019-0087, Order No. 5 (Nov. 15, 2018) (“United CAF II ETC Designation Order”); *see also* Application of United Services, Inc. for Expanded Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Missouri, Docket No. DA-2021-0200, Order No. 5 (Mar. 3, 2021) (“United RDOF ETC Designation Order”).

(“Missouri USF”) in all areas in Missouri where United Fiber is designated as an ETC, including its proposed Expanded ETC Designation Area.

United Fiber plans to provide the same gigabit-tier broadband and voice services in the RDOF-funded census blocks that are proposed to be assigned from TurboNet Technologies to United Fiber. This area comprises the “Expanded ETC Designation Area” in which Petitioner hereby requests ETC designation to participate in the federal USF High-Cost and/or Lifeline programs, as well as the Missouri USF.

I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

Petitioner is a wholly owned subsidiary of United Electric Cooperative, Inc. (“United Electric Cooperative”) a rural electric cooperative headquartered in Savannah, Missouri, and organized and existing under the laws of the state of Missouri. United Electric Cooperative is a Chapter 394 rural electric cooperative engaged in the distribution of electric energy. United Electric Cooperative serves the counties of Andrew, Atchison, Buchanan, Caldwell, Clinton, Clay, Daviess, DeKalb, Harrison, Holt, Gentry, Nodaway, Platte, Ray and Worth, and portions of additional counties in Iowa.

Petitioner, a Missouri corporation, has deployed and operates a state-of-the-art, low latency, fiber-to-the-home (“FTTH”) network, which provides gigabit-tier broadband and VoIP-based voice services throughout its parent electric cooperative’s area, as well as in adjacent areas that, historically, largely lacked access to such services. Petitioner continues to expand its FTTH network using its own facilities, as well as those of United Electric Cooperative, to provide gigabit-tier broadband and interconnected VoIP services.

Petitioner offers low-latency broadband service at actual speeds of at least 1 Gigabit per second downstream and at least 500 Mbps upstream, offers at least 2 terabytes of monthly usage

and provides its customers with voice grade access to the Public Switched Telephone Network (“PSTN”) through its provision of interconnected VoIP-based voice services.

The street and mailing address of Petitioner’s principal office is 30208 U.S. Hwy 136, Maryville, MO 64468. Petitioner’s electronic mail address is: dfarnan@ueci.coop. Petitioner’s telephone number is (800) 585-6454 and its fax number is (816) 324-3157. Petitioner does not have any pending action, or final unsatisfied judgment or decisions against it from any state or federal agency or court, which involves customer service or rates, which action, judgment or decision has occurred within three (3) years of the date of this petition. Petitioner does not have any annual reports or assessment fees that are overdue.

Correspondence, communications, orders and decisions regarding this Petition should be directed to:

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and

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Petitioner seeks expanded High-Cost and Low-Income ETC designation from the Commission throughout the RDOF-funded census blocks that TurboNet Technologies is seeking

to assign to United Fiber which are identified in **Exhibit A**, expanded, Lifeline-only ETC authority in certain areas which are identified in **Exhibit B**, as well as to participate in the Missouri USF program in all areas in Missouri where United Fiber is designated as an ETC, including the requested Expanded ETC Designation Area in this Petition..

Petitioner continues to meet all of the federal and state statutory and regulatory requirements for ETC designation. Designating Petitioner as an ETC in the additional areas requested will serve the public interest by enabling Petitioner to bring gigabit-tier broadband and interconnected VoIP services to additional rural areas of Missouri that historically have lacked such services.

II. THE COMMISSION HAS AUTHORITY TO GRANT THE EXPANDED ETC DESIGNATION REQUESTED BY PETITIONER

Section 214(e)(2) of the Act gives authority to State commissions to designate a common carrier as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (“ETC”). Under Missouri regulations, an ETC is defined as “a carrier designated as such by the Missouri Public Service Commission pursuant to 47 U.S.C. 214(e) and 47 CFR Part 54 Subpart C.”²

III. PETITIONER MEETS THE STATUTORY AND REGULATORY PREREQUISITES TO BE DESIGNATED AS AN EXPANDED ETC

As demonstrated herein, Petitioner satisfies each of the state and federal statutory and regulatory requirements for expanded ETC designation.

² 4 CSR 240-31.010(5).

A. Petitioner Will Provide Service as a Common Carrier

Petitioner will provide its services on a common carrier basis. As such, Petitioner certifies that it is a common carrier under §§ 214(e)(1) and(e)(2) of the Act.³

B. Petitioner Will Offer the Services Supported by the Federal Universal Service Support Mechanisms

As described below, Petitioner certifies that it will provide the following services that are supported by federal universal service support mechanisms:⁴

1. Voice Grade Access to the PSTN – Petitioner will meet this requirement through the provision of IP-based voice communications service that is interconnected to the PSTN. Petitioner will be legally responsible for dealing with customer problems, providing quality of service guarantees, and meeting universal service-related requirements. Petitioner will offer stand-alone voice telephony service throughout its proposed ETC designation area and will offer such service at rates that are reasonably comparable to urban rates. This service will include minutes of use for local service provided at no charge to end users and access to emergency service via E-911, wherever available from local government or public safety organizations.⁵ Petitioner also commits to provide toll limitation services to qualifying low-income consumers as provided in §§ 54.400-54.423 of the Rules.⁶
2. Broadband Internet Access Services – Petitioner's broadband Internet offering will provide the capability to transmit data to and receive data by wire from all or substantially all Internet endpoints, including any capabilities that are incidental to and enable the operation of the communications service. Petitioner will offer low-latency Internet service at actual speeds of at least 1 Gbps downstream and at least 500 Mbps upstream, and offer at least 2 terabytes of monthly usage

³ See Exhibit C (Affidavit of Darren Farnan).

⁴ See *id.*

⁵ 47 C.F.R. § 54.101(a)(1) and (b).

⁶ 47 C.F.R. § 54.101(a)(1).

throughout the proposed Expanded ETC Designation Area and will offer such service at rates that are reasonably comparable to urban rates.⁷

3. Lifeline Service – Petitioner will offer subsidized Lifeline voice and broadband services, including a standalone voice service offering, to qualifying low-income consumers in accordance with the FCC’s rules within its proposed Expanded ETC Designation Area.⁸

Petitioner further commits to provide these services consistent with applicable FCC’s High-Cost and Lifeline universal service support rules, as applicable.⁹

C. Petitioner Will Provide Service Using Its Own Facilities

Petitioner will deploy and operate a state-of-the-art, low-latency, FTTH facilities-based network to provide high-speed broadband Internet access and interconnected VoIP-based voice services to those within its proposed Expanded ETC Designation Area who lack access to such services.¹⁰

D. Petitioner Will Provide the Requisite Supported Services Throughout Its Proposed Expanded ETC Designation Area

Petitioner commits to providing the requisite supported services throughout its proposed Expanded ETC Designation Area, consistent with all applicable requirements.¹¹

E. Petitioner Will Advertise the Availability of Its Services and Charges Using Media of General Distribution

Petitioner advertises and will continue to advertise the availability of and charges for its supported service offerings using media of general distribution, and will undertake outreach

⁷ 47 C.F.R. § 54.101(a)(2).

⁸ 47 C.F.R. § 54.405(a), 54.400 *et. seq.*

⁹ *See* 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.101 and 54.201.

¹⁰ 47 C.F.R. § 54.201(d)(1).

¹¹ *See* 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.101 and 54.201.

initiatives to increase consumer awareness of its service offerings, consistent with all applicable requirements.¹² Petitioner offers and advertises and will continue to offer and advertise its high-speed broadband and interconnected VoIP-based voice services through a combination of media channels, such as newspaper, magazines, and other print advertisements, outdoor advertising, direct marketing, and/or the Internet. Petitioner will continue to advertise its universal service offerings in a manner consistent with applicable requirements.

F. Petitioner Possesses the Financial and Technical Capability to Provide the Supported Services

With the financial backing of its parent, United Electric Cooperative, Inc., Petitioner possesses the financial and technical capabilities to pay for all expenses (*e.g.*, construction, hardware, operations, etc.) to expand its fiber optic network and to begin the provision of voice and broadband services throughout the proposed Expanded ETC Designation Area. Petitioner and/or United Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be able to obtain the requisite amount of lending under its existing lines of credit and Petitioner and/or United Electric Cooperative, Inc. is able to obtain additional financing, if necessary, in addition to federal Universal Service Fund subsidies being made available to Petitioner.

G. Petitioner Will Meet the Additional FCC Requirements for Designation as an Expanded ETC

Petitioner further certifies that it will meet all of the FCC's requirements for designation as an ETC under § 214(e)(1) of the Act.¹³

1. Compliance with Applicable Service and Performance Quality Requirements. Petitioner certifies that it will comply with the service

¹² 47 C.F.R. § 54.201(d)(2)

¹³ See Exhibit C.

requirements applicable to each type of federal Universal Service Fund support that it receives.

2. **Ability to Remain Functional in Emergency Situations.** Petitioner certifies that its fiber optic network will have the ability to remain functional in emergency situations, will have a reasonable amount of back-up power to ensure functionality without an external power source, will be able to reroute traffic around damaged facilities and will be capable of managing traffic spikes resulting from emergency situations.¹⁴ Petitioner's fiber optic network will support telephone service using Session Initiation Protocol-based VoIP technology and will support all phone features, including E-911 services.

IV. THE COMMISSION HAS PREVIOUSLY GRANTED THE PETITIONER DESIGNATION AS AN ETC

As referenced above, the Petitioner was designated as a High-Cost and/or Lifeline ETC by the Commission on November 15, 2018 and March 3, 2021.¹⁵ In connection with granting Petitioner's applications for designation as an ETC, the Commission reviewed Petitioner's representations, certifications, and commitments regarding the services provided by Petitioner that are supported by federal universal service support mechanisms¹⁶, and determined that the Petitioner "...has met all federal and state requirements and that it is in the public interest to grant the ETC application."¹⁷ Petitioner hereby reaffirms its compliance with and commitment to each of the requirements. In addition, Petitioner remains compliant with all reporting and assessment obligations to the Commission and the federal Universal Service Fund.

¹⁴ See 47 C.F.R. § 54.202(a)(2).

¹⁵ The Commission previously designated Petitioner as a high-cost and low-income ETC in the State of Missouri in census blocks where the Petitioner was allocated federal CAF II and RDOF support. See United CAF II ETC Designation Order; see also United RDOF ETC Designation Order.

¹⁶ See United CAF II ETC Application at 4-5; see also United RDOF ETC Application at 4-8.

¹⁷ United CAF II ETC Designation Order at 3; see also United RDOF ETC Designation Order at 2 (stating "... the Commission finds that United Services has met the requirements for ETC designation"). A discussion of public interest considerations is contained in Section IV, *infra*.

Since the Commission has already determined that Petitioner meets the requirements applicable to an ETC in the State of Missouri, this petition is limited to a request by Petitioner that the Commission expand Petitioner's ETC designation throughout the RDOF-funded census blocks that TurboNet Technologies is seeking to assign to United Fiber which are identified in **Exhibit A**, as well as certain additional areas where United Fiber is seeking Lifeline-only ETC designation which are identified in **Exhibit B**, and for authority to participate in the Missouri USF in all areas in Missouri where United Fiber is designated as an ETC, including its proposed Expanded ETC Designation Area.

V. GRANT OF THIS PETITION WILL SERVE THE PUBLIC INTEREST

The grant of this Petition will clearly serve the public interest by enabling Petitioner to provide low-latency, gigabit-speed broadband and interconnected VoIP-based voice services to residents in its proposed Expanded ETC Designation Area, as well as to provide subsidized voice and broadband services to those households that seek and qualify for federal Lifeline and/or Missouri USF benefits. Petitioner's expanded designation as an ETC by the Commission in the additional areas requested will "encourage the deployment on a reasonable and timely basis of advanced telecommunications capability to [additional] Americans"¹⁸ and will aid the Commission's objective of ensuring that federal universal service support, including RDOF support, is used efficiently and effectively.

VI. REQUEST FOR EXPANDED AUTHORITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MISSOURI UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND

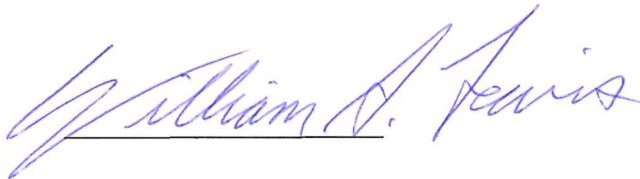
¹⁸ 47 U.S.C. § 1302(a).

As noted previously, United Fiber is also seeking Commission authority to be eligible to participate in the Missouri USF, including the Missouri Lifeline and Disabled Programs in all areas in Missouri where United Fiber is designated as an ETC, including its proposed Expanded ETC Designation Area.

VII. CONCLUSION

For all the foregoing reasons, Petitioner respectfully requests that the Commission designate it as a High-Cost and/or Lifeline ETC in the additional areas requested, as well as allow Petitioner to participate in the Missouri USF, including the Missouri Lifeline and Disabled Programs, in all areas in Missouri where United Fiber is designated as an ETC, including the requested Expanded ETC Designation Area in this Petition.

Respectfully submitted,



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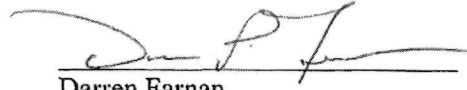
Counsel for United Fiber, LLC

Dated: March 26, 2025

VERIFICATION

STATE OF MISSOURI)
)
COUNTY OF Andrew) ss

I, Darren Farnan, state that I am the General Manager of United Fiber, LLC; that I have read the above and foregoing document; that the statements contained therein are true and correct to the best of my information, knowledge and belief; and, that I am authorized to make this statement on behalf of United Fiber, LLC.



Darren Farnan
General Manager
United Fiber, LLC

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 20 day of March, 2025.



Notary Public

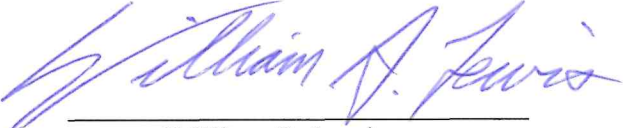


CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned certifies that a true copy of the foregoing Petition was served by electronic mail or U.S. Mail, postage prepaid, this 26th day March, 2025 upon the following:

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William S. Lewis

EXHIBIT A

**LIST OF CENSUS BLOCKS IN WHICH
UNITED FIBER, LLC SEEKS EXPANDED DESIGNATION
AS A HIGH COST AND LIFELINE ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER**

291070902003003	291070902004135
291070902003004	291070902004136
291070902003006	291070902004137
291070902003009	291070902004138
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291070902003037	291070902004140
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291070902004011	291070902004143
291070902004012	291070902004144
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291070902004021	291070902004154
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291070902004116	291070902005026
291070902004117	291070902005028
291070902004120	291070902005029
291070902004121	291070902005030
291070902004122	291070902005031
291070902004123	
291070902004124	
291070902004127	
291070902004128	
291070902004133	
291070902004134	

EXHIBIT B

LIST OF CENSUS BLOCKS IN WHICH UNITED FIBER, LLC SEEKS EXPANDED DESIGNATION AS A LIFELINE-ONLY ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER

290030101002003	290210010001016	290210024001026	290210030001364	290879601001206
290030101002006	290210010001017	290210024001027	290210030001365	290879601002000
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290030101003010	290210010001029	290210024001033	290210030001371	290879601002006
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290030101003026	290210010001035	290210024001039	290210030001377	290879601002012
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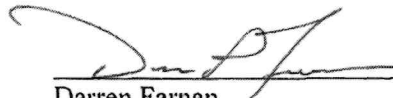
EXHIBIT C

AFFIDAVIT OF DARREN FARNAN

Darren Farnan, after being duly sworn, states the following:

1. I have personal knowledge of the facts and information set forth in this Affidavit and I am competent to testify to these facts if called as a witness.
2. I am the General Manager of United Fiber, LLC ("Petitioner" or "United Fiber"). I have read the Petition to which this Affidavit is attached. I have knowledge of the facts stated in the Petition and those facts are true to the best of my knowledge and my belief.
3. Petitioner certifies that it is a common carrier under §§ 214(e)(1)-(2) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended ("Act").
4. Petitioner commits to provide the services and functionalities required for designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier ("ETC") in the RDOF-funded areas proposed to be assigned from TurboNet Technologies, Inc. to United Fiber, as well as the additional areas in which United Fiber seeks expanded, Lifeline-only ETC designation.
5. Petitioner certifies that it will meet all of the FCC's requirements for designation as an ETC under § 214(e)(1) of the Act, and all of the Commission's requirements for designation as an ETC.
6. Applicant is eligible to be designated as an ETC within the meaning of Section 214(e) of the Act and is eligible to receive federal universal service support pursuant to Section 254(e) of the Act.
7. Petitioner will use the federal high-cost support funds that it receives only to provide, deploy, upgrade and/or maintain facilities and services for which the support is intended.

8. By signing this Affidavit, I hereby certify that neither I, nor any other members of this filing party, has had communications with a Commissioner, Commissioner Advisor, Regulatory Law Judge, member of the General Counsel or any member of their support team in the sixty (60) days prior to the filing date of this application regarding any substantive issue included in this filing. If any communication of this sort has occurred in the previous sixty (60) day period, I further certify this application was held until sixty (60) days have passed from the date of the subject communication, or United Fiber has requested a waiver for good cause as allowed by Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-1.017 (1)(D).

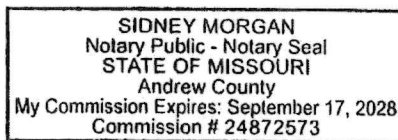


Darren Farnan
General Manager
United Fiber, LLC

STATE OF MISSOURI)
COUNTY OF Andrew)

ss

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 25 day of March, 2025.



Notary Public