

In the Matter of Application of Socket
Telecom, LLC for Designation as an
Eligible Telecommunications Carrier

Morris L. Woodruff
Secretary

Ronald D. Pridgin, Regulatory Law Judge,
by delegation of authority pursuant
to Section 386.240, RSMo 2016.

Dated at Jefferson City, Missouri,
on this 19th day of January, 2021.

BEFORE THE MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Application of Socket Telecom, LLC)
for Designation as an Eligible)
Telecommunications Carrier) File No. _____

Socket Telecom, LLC's Application for Designation As an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier and Request for Waiver of 20 CSR 4240-4.017

COMES NOW Socket Telecom, LLC ("Socket") and respectfully requests the Commission enter an Order granting this Application to designate Socket as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier ("ETC") pursuant to 20 CSR 4240-31.016 for specific census blocks under the provisions of 47 CFR 54.201(d) to receive federal universal service support through the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund ("RDOF"), as well as Lifeline low income support (but not the disabled program), for the provision of broadband internet access, broadband-voice bundled, and voice only offerings. The service area contains 82 census block groups in Boone County, Missouri. A list of the census block groups is contained in **Exhibit A**. The RDOF rules require provisional auction winners to obtain ETC status by June 7, 2020 and Socket therefore respectfully requests expeditious action on this application to meet this obligation. For the reasons stated below, designating Socket as an ETC is consistent with statutory and regulatory requirements and is in the public interest.

In support of this application, Socket states as follows:

1. Socket is a certificated competitive local exchange company in the State of Missouri. Socket is a Missouri limited liability company in good standing (see certificate, **Exhibit B**), with its principal place of business located at 2703 Clark Avenue, Columbia, Missouri 65202, and it can be reached as follows: telephone – 573-817-0000 and facsimile – 573-441-1050, website- www.socket.net. Socket is a wholly owned subsidiary of Socket Holdings

Corporation.

2. Socket is an authorized provider of intrastate switched and non-switched local exchange and interexchange telecommunications services in Missouri under certificates granted and tariffs approved by the Commission. Socket is also an authorized provider of interstate telecommunications services in Missouri under the jurisdiction of the Federal Communications Commission. Socket provides its regulated services as a common carrier. Socket is also authorized to provide telecommunications services in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas, but is not a designated ETC in any state. Socket's ownership and management are not shared with another company receiving universal service funding.
3. All inquiries, correspondence, communications, pleadings, notices, orders, and decisions relating to this matter should be directed to:

Carl J. Lumley, #32869
Curtis, Heinz, Garrett & O'Keefe, PC
130 S. Bemiston, Suite 200
St. Louis, Missouri 63105
Telephone: (314) 725-8788
Facsimile: (314) 725-8789
Email: clumley@chgolaw.com

R. Matthew Kohly
Socket Telecom, LLC
Telephone: (573) 777-1991. Ext. 551
Facsimile: (543) 441-1050
Email: rmkohly@sockettelecom.com

4. Socket's key management includes:

George Pfenenger, CEO

Carson Coffman, COO

Kurt Bruemmer – Director Business Improvement and Control

Zeke Long – Director of Outside Plant

Adam Voight – Marketing Manager

Josh Henggeler – Controller

Dave Sill – IT Director

Janet Moss – Director of Human Relations

Melissa Higgins – Director of Sales

Scott Stratman – Manager of Network Operations

Matt Kohly – Director of Carrier Relations & Government Affairs

Russ Mulkey – Manager of Customer Care

5. As an RDOF recipient, Socket will offer low latency broadband service as both a stand-alone service and bundled with voice service. It will also offer standalone voice service.
6. Socket does not have any pending action or final unsatisfied judgements or decisions against it from any state or federal agency or court which involve customer service, rates, which action, judgment, or decision has occurred within three years of the date of this application.
7. Socket does not have any annual reports or assessment fees that are overdue to the Commission. Socket is compliant in all reporting and assessments requirements. Socket is compliant with contribution obligations to federal USF.
8. No matter has been brought in the last ten years by any state or federal regulatory or law enforcements agency against any of the individuals, entities, managers, or directors associated with Socket or any company sharing common ownership or management with Socket, involving fraud, deceit, perjury, stealing or the omission or misstatement of material fact in connection with a commercial transaction.
9. Socket will comply with the ETC requirements established by the Missouri Public Service Commission and the FCC. Further, Socket commits to maintaining current company contact

information on the Commission Electronic Filing and Information System and to advising the Commission of any changes in its contact information. Socket has checked its contacts in EFIS and confirmed such information is correct.

10. As described below, Socket certifies that it will provide the following services that are supported by universal support mechanisms. Rates, Terms and Conditions for these services will be available at www.socket.net.

Voice Telephony – Socket will meet this requirement by providing voice communications services connected to the PSTN. Socket will be legally responsible for dealing with customer problems, meeting quality of service guarantees, and meeting universal service obligations. Socket will offer voice services on a stand-alone basis and bundled with qualifying broadband services throughout its proposed ETC designated serving area at rates reasonably comparable to rates in urban areas. This service will include minutes of use for local service, and access to emergency service, via E-911 where available. Socket also commits to provide toll limitation services to qualifying low-income consumers.

Broadband Internet Access Services – Socket Internet service will provide the capability to transmit data to and receive data from all or substantially all Internet endpoints. Socket will offer low-latency Internet service at actual speeds of 1Gbps downstream and 100Mbps upstream with no data caps throughout the area where Socket is designated ETC.

Lifeline Service – Socket will offer subsidized Lifeline voice and broadband services, including voice service on a standalone basis, to qualifying low-income

consumers in accordance with the FCC's rules within its proposed ETC designated serving area.

11. Socket will provide these services consistent with applicable PSC and FCC rules. Socket has not obtained any waivers from the FCC. Socket's RDOF Application is attached hereto as **Exhibit C**. Per 20 CSR 4240-2.135(2), this is confidential market-specific information which relates to services offered in competition with others.
12. Socket will provide these voice and broadband services over a Fiber to the Home facilities-based network owned by Socket in its ETC designated area.
13. Socket will advertise the availability of these services throughout its ETC designated area using media of general distribution in a manner designed to reach those likely to qualify for such services. Socket agrees to comply with all form and content requirements, if any, promulgated by the FCC and this Commission in the future and required of all designated ETCs, including statements that the service is a Lifeline service, that it is a government assistance program, that the service is non-transferable, and that it is available only to eligible consumers and limited to one discount per economic household.
14. Socket will construct and manage its network and provision services in a manner that allows it to remain functional in emergency situations; including those that cause power outages. Socket has multiple, diverse connections to the Internet that allow it to handle spikes in traffic, including those resulting from emergency situations.
15. Socket's request for designation as an ETC in the requested ETC service area is in the public interest. Despite Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers previously receiving high-cost support for these areas, these census blocks are unserved or underserved with broadband internet access availability and granting ETC status will lead to the availability of high-speed

broadband internet access services in the ETC designed area. Granting Socket ETC status will serve the public interest by ensuring Socket is eligible to receive high-cost support. This funding will be used to advance the FCC's goal of deploying voice and broadband networks in rural high-cost areas, ensuring rural consumers, in particular low-income consumers, businesses, and anchor institutions benefit from access to high-speed broadband service.

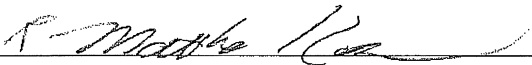
16. Applicant seeks waiver of rule 20 CSR 4240-4.017 for good cause to avoid a delay of 60 days to make this filing and accelerate the introduction of its services and declares that it has had no communication with the office of the Commission within the prior 150 days regarding any substantive issue likely to be germane to this proceeding.
17. For the reasons stated above, Socket respectfully requests: (i) an expeditious Order designating the Company as an ETC in Missouri for the purpose of being eligible to receive federal funding pursuant to the FCC's RDOF auction and the federal and state Lifeline program; (ii) waiver of 20 CSR 4240-4.017 and (iii) such other relief as this Commission deems to be just and equitable.

STATE OF MISSOURI)
) SS
COUNTY OF BOONE)

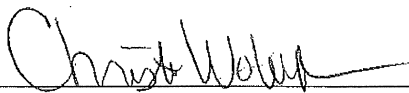
Affidavit

I, R, Matthew Kohly, a natural person, do hereby swear and affirm that I am an officer of Socket Telecom, LLC, the applicant in the above Application (“Applicant”), and that the information and statements contained in this application are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

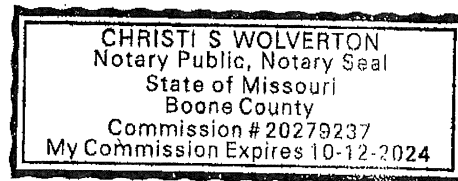
By signing this form, I hereby certify that neither I, nor any other members of this filing party, has had communications with a Commissioner, Commissioner Advisor, Regulatory Law Judge, member of the General Counsel or any member of their support team in the 150 days prior to the filing date of this application regarding any substantive issue included in this filing.



Subscribed and sworn to before me this 14th day of January, 2021.



Notary Public



Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Carl J. Lumley

Carl J. Lumley, #32869

Curtis, Heinz, Garrett & O'Keefe, P.C.
130 S. Bemiston, Suite 200
St. Louis, Missouri 63105
(314) 725-8788
(314) 725-8789 (FAX)
clumley@chgolaw.com

Attorney for Socket Telecom, LLC

Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of this document was emailed to the parties listed below
on this 15th day of January.

/s/ Carl J. Lumley

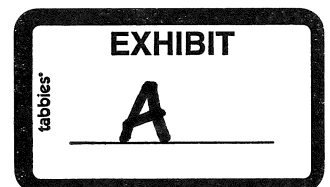
Carl J. Lumley

General Counsel
Missouri Public Service Commission
P.O. Box 360
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102
gencounsel@psc.mo.gov

Office of Public Counsel
P.O. Box 2230
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102
opcservice@ded.mo.gov

Attachment A

Census Block	County	Census Group
290190011042014	Boone	290190011042
290190011042015	Boone	290190011042
290190011042029	Boone	290190011042
290190011042034	Boone	290190011042
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290539503002050	Cooper	290539503002
290539503003066	Cooper	290539503003
290899603004005	Howard	290899603004
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STATE OF MISSOURI



John R. Ashcroft
Secretary of State

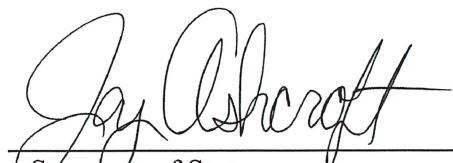
CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING

I, John R. Ashcroft, Secretary of State of the STATE OF MISSOURI, do hereby certify that the records in my office and in my care and custody reveal that

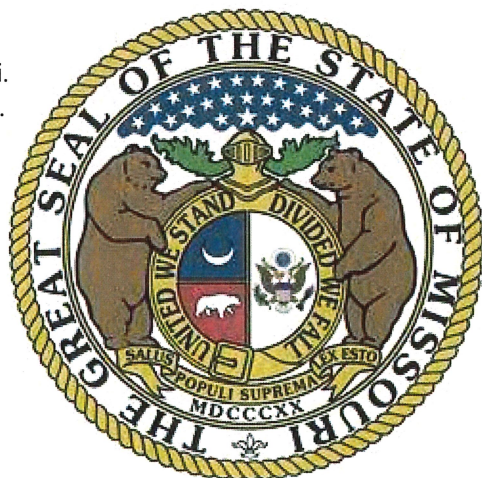
SOCKET TELECOM, LLC
LC0050887

A Missouri entity was created under the laws of this State on 5/11/2001, and is Active, having fully complied with all the requirements of this office.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and cause to be affixed the GREAT SEAL of the State of Missouri.
Done at the City of Jefferson, the 14th day of January, 2021.


Secretary of State

Certification Number: CERT-IN50055



EXHIBIT


B

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STATE OF MISSOURI

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

I have compared the preceding copy with the original on file in this office and I do hereby certify the same to be a true copy therefrom and the whole thereof.

**WITNESS my hand and seal of the Public Service Commission,
at Jefferson City, Missouri, this day of 19th January, 2021.**




Morris L. Woodruff
Secretary

MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

January 19, 2021

File/Case No. TA-2021-0224

**Missouri Public Service
Commission**

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Socket Telecom, LLC

Carl J Lumley
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clumley@chgolaw.com

Enclosed find a certified copy of an Order or Notice issued in the above-referenced matter(s).

Sincerely,



**Morris L. Woodruff
Secretary**

Distributed to All Local Exchange Carriers Certificated to Provide Service in Missouri.

Recipients listed above with a valid e-mail address will receive electronic service. Recipients without a valid e-mail address will receive paper service.