



# PUBLIC NOTICE

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**DA 04-3503**

**FEDERAL-STATE JOINT BOARD ON UNIVERSAL SERVICE TO HOLD EN BANC  
HEARING ON HIGH-COST UNIVERSAL SERVICE SUPPORT IN AREAS SERVED  
BY RURAL CARRIERS**

**CC Docket No. 96-45**

**Release Date: November 2,**

**2004**

The Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service (Joint Board) will hold an *en banc* hearing on Wednesday, November 17, 2004, in Nashville, Tennessee. The Joint Board will discuss the Commission's rules relating to the basis of high-cost universal service support in areas served by rural carriers, the definition of rural telephone company, the basis of support for competitive eligible telecommunications carriers, and high-cost universal service support for transferred exchanges.<sup>1</sup> Panelists representing a broad range of interests will discuss their positions and respond to questions from the Joint Board members.

The hearing will be held from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Gaylord Opryland Resort, 2800 Opryland Drive, Nashville, TN 37214. The agenda for the hearing and a list of panelists are attached. The hearing is open to the public and seating will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

For further information, contact Ted Burmeister, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau at (202) 418-7400, TTY (202) 418-0484.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Order, 19 FCC Rcd 11538 (2004) (*Referral Order*); *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service Seeks Comment on Certain of the Commission's Rules Relating to High-Cost Universal Service Support*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Public Notice, FCC 04J-2 (rel. Aug. 16, 2004).

**AGENDA FOR PUBLIC MEETING  
ON HIGH-COST UNIVERSAL SERVICE SUPPORT  
FOR AREAS SERVED BY RURAL CARRIERS AND RELATED ISSUES**

**November 17, 2004**

**Gaylord Opryland Resort, Nashville, TN  
Room Washington B**

**1:00 – 1:30 p.m.:       Opening Remarks by Joint Board Chair and Commissioners**

**1:30 – 3:30 p.m.:       Panel 1: Support in Areas Served by Rural Carriers and the  
Definition of “Rural Telephone Company”**

*Key Issues:* What universal service support mechanism should succeed the Rural Task Force plan? Should rural carriers receive support based on forward-looking economic costs or should support continue to be based on embedded costs? If the former, should the Commission use a new model or should the synthesis model or its inputs be modified to apply to rural carriers? If rural carrier support should continue to be based on embedded costs, what changes, if any, should be made to how the Commission determines costs? Regardless of how the Commission determines costs, how should the Commission calculate support (e.g., study area or statewide average costs)? Should the Commission continue to use the statutory definition of “rural telephone company” to determine which carriers are rural carriers for purposes of universal service support?

*Panelists:*

- Rich Coit, South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition
- Paul Garnett, Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association
- Jeff Reynolds, Parrish, Blessing & Associates, Inc.
- Joel Lubin, AT&T
- Dennis Weller, Verizon
- Dale Lehman, Alaska Pacific University
- Lee Selwyn, Economics and Technology, Inc.

**3:30 – 5:00 p.m.:       Panel 2: Basis of Support for CETCs and Transferred Exchanges**

*Key Issues:* What methodology should the Commission use to calculate the basis of support for eligible telecommunications carriers? Should a competitor receive support based on the incumbent carrier’s costs or its own costs? If the latter, how should those costs be calculated? Should the Commission modify rule 47 C.F.R. § 54.305 (which provides that a carrier that acquires exchanges from an unaffiliated carrier shall receive universal service support for those acquired exchanges at the same per-line support levels)?

*Panelists:*

- Scott Bergs, Midwest Wireless
- David Cole, CenturyTel
- Gene Johnson, Fairpoint Communications
- Denise Parrish, Wyoming Office of Consumer Advocate
- Dale Lehman, Alaska Pacific University
- Lee Selwyn, Economics and Technology, Inc.