



PUBLIC NOTICE

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WIRELINE COMPETITION BUREAU ANNOUNCES SELECTION OF THE SECURE AND TRUSTED COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM FUND ADMINISTRATOR

WC Docket No. 18-89

With this Public Notice, the Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) announces the selection of Ernst & Young LLP (Ernst & Young) as the Fund Administrator for the \$1.9 billion Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Reimbursement Program (Reimbursement Program). Ernst & Young will manage the Reimbursement Program and among other duties will be responsible for reviewing requests submitted by Reimbursement Program participants and providing recommendations on funding decisions to the Bureau. Selection of the Fund Administrator is a significant step in implementing the Reimbursement Program and will facilitate the removal, replacement, and disposal of communications equipment and services posing a national security risk from the networks of providers of advanced communications service.

The Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act of 2019 (Secure Networks Act) signed into law on March 12, 2020, directs the Federal Communications Commission (Commission) to establish a program to reimburse eligible providers of advanced communications service for reasonable costs associated with removing, replacing, and disposing of covered communications equipment and services.¹ The Commission subsequently adopted the *Second Report and Order* on December 10, 2020, establishing a framework for the Reimbursement Program.² The Commission directed the Bureau to adopt the necessary forms, policies, and procedures for the Reimbursement Program and authorized the Bureau “to engage contractors to assist in the reimbursement process and the administration of the Reimbursement Program.”³ On December 27, 2020, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, appropriated \$1.9 billion to the Commission to “carry out” the Reimbursement Program.⁴

¹ Pub. L. No. 116-124, 133 Stat. 158 (2020) (codified as amended at 47 U.S.C. §§ 1601-1609).

² See *Protecting Against National Security Threats to the Communications Supply Chain Through FCC Programs*, WC Docket No. 18-89, Second Report and Order, 35 FCC Rcd 14284 (2020) (*Second Report and Order*).

³ *Id.* at 14385, paras. 180-81.

⁴ See Pub. L. 116-260, Division N-Additional Coronavirus Response and Relief, Title IX-Broadband Internet Access Service, §§ 901, 906, 134 Stat. 1182 (2020). The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 also amended the Secure Networks Act. On February 17, 2021, the Commission proposed to amend its rules consistent with the Consolidated Appropriations Act amendments. See *Protecting Against National Security Threats to the Communications Supply*

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On April 27, 2021, the Commission's Office of the Managing Director awarded a task order against the General Services Administration's One Acquisition Solution for Integrated Services (OASIS) Tier 3, Best-in-Class Solutions, Governmentwide Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract to Ernst & Young to act as the Fund Administrator for the Reimbursement Program. Ernst & Young has a proven track record of successfully administering the Commission's broadcast incentive auction reimbursement program.

For additional information on this matter, please email supplychain@fcc.gov.

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