Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Report on the Future of the Universal Service Fund	)	WC Docket No. 21-476
	)	
	)	
	)	

ORDER GRANTING EXTENSION OF TIME

Adopted: January 4, 2022 **Released: January 4, 2022**

New Deadline for Filing Comments: February 17, 2022
New Deadline for Filing Reply Comments: March 17, 2022

By the Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau:

1. By this Order, the Wireline Competition Bureau grants a request to extend the initial comment and reply comment deadlines by 30 and 45 days, respectively, in the above captioned proceeding.[1] Pursuant to this Order, the extended comment date is February 17, 2022 and the extended reply comment date is March 17, 2022.

2. On December 15, 2021, the Commission released a Notice of Inquiry[2] commencing the proceeding for the Report on the Future of the Universal Service Fund as required by section 60104(c) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Infrastructure Act).[3] The Notice of Inquiry established January 18, 2022 as the deadline for filing comments and January 31, 2022 as the deadline for reply comments. On December 22, 2021, a coalition of organizations (collectively, the Public Interest and Industry Stakeholders) filed a motion to extend the initial comment and reply comment deadlines by 30 and 45 days, respectively, to February 17, 2022 and March 17, 2022.[4] For the reasons stated below, we find that the requested extension of time is warranted, and we modify the comment and reply comment dates accordingly.

3. The Public Interest and Industry Stakeholders argue that the requested extension is necessary because the Notice of Inquiry raises a number of complicated and important issues and the current comment and reply deadlines will not allow commenters sufficient time to provide a robust record due to the holiday season and the fact that many other Commission proceedings have concurrent comment periods.[5] The Public Interest and Industry Stakeholders also note that the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is expected to issue a request for comments

[1] Motion of Public Knowledge et al. for Extension of Time, WC Docket No. 21-476 (filed Dec. 22, 2021), https://www fcc.gov/ecfs/filing/122175245063 (Motion).

[2] *Report on the Future of the Universal Service Fund*, WC Docket No. 21-476, Notice of Inquiry, FCC 21-127 (Dec. 15, 2021) (*Notice*).

[3] Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Pub. L. No. 117-58, 135 Stat. 429, div. F, tit. I, § 60104(c) (2021).

[4] *See* Motion at 1.

[5] *Id.* at 2-3.

shortly on many of the broadband funding programs created by the Infrastructure Act.[6] They also argue that an extension will not prejudice any party or affect the Commission's ability to consider issues raised in the Notice of Inquiry.[7]

4. As set forth in section 1.46 of the Commission's rules,[8] the Commission does not routinely grant extensions of time for filing comments. In this instance, however, we find there is good cause to grant the requested extension of comment and reply comment dates given the importance of developing a robust record for the proceeding. In particular, we find that the record in this proceeding will benefit from commenters having had the opportunity to further monitor the Commission's implementation of the Affordable Connectivity Program and NTIA's implementation of broadband programs created by the Infrastructure Act.[9]

5. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED, pursuant to sections 4(i) and 303(r) of the Communications Act, as amended, 47 U.S.C. §§ 154(i), 303(r), and sections 0.91, 0.131, 0.291, 0.331, 1.2, and 1.46 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR §§ 0.91, 0.131, 0.291, 0.331, 1.2, and 1.46, that the Motion for Extension of Time filed by the Public Interest and Industry Stakeholders is GRANTED.

6. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the date for filing initial comments IS EXTENDED to February 17, 2022, and that the date for filing reply comments IS EXTENDED to March 17, 2022.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Kris Anne Monteith
Chief
Wireline Competition Bureau

[6] *Id.* at 4.

[7] *Id.* at 5.

[8] 47 CFR § 1.46.

[9] The Notice of Inquiry seeks comment on the impact of both programs on the Commission's universal service goals. *See Notice* at 8, paras. 17-28.