

**STATEMENT OF
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN MIGNON L. CLYBURN**

*Re: Easy Telephone Services d/b/a Easy Wireless; Assist Wireless, LLC; Icon Telecom, Inc.;
TracFone Wireless, Inc.; and UTPhone, Inc.*

The Lifeline program provides critical communications services to those who are least likely to be able to secure these services for themselves. It affords the less fortunate an ability to contact family, employers, prospective employers and – most critically – emergency services, by the same rapid and reliable means that are routinely available to the rest of us. Protecting this vital program from fraud, waste and abuse is a central component of our efforts to ensure the program’s viability, and it is with this in mind that we propose the very substantial penalties in these cases.

Collecting support for duplicate Lifeline service – the practice we address in these cases – is not only illegal, it diverts resources from legitimate users of the program and is unquestionably within the power and duty of Lifeline providers to prevent. It must stop. And, the more than \$14 million in forfeitures we propose here is meant to achieve that end.

Our goal is to be tough, but fair. The fines in these cases are purposely large. However, I want to ensure adequate deterrence without harming the legitimate service these providers bring to their subscribers. Accordingly, I have instructed the Enforcement Bureau to carefully consider the companies’ responses to these NALs. Ultimately, our objective is to eliminate fraud, waste and abuse, while preserving and promoting the availability of communications services to those in need. I will do all I can to ensure that we achieve this balanced result.