



ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

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Commission to Hold Oral Proceeding for Public Comment on the Arizona Universal Service Fund Permanent Rulemaking which will Help Growth of Rural Economies

PHOENIX —The Arizona Corporation Commission will hold an oral proceeding Monday, August 14 at 10 a.m. to receive public comment on proposed permanent changes to the Arizona Universal Service Fund (AUSF) rules.

Today, approximately 250,000 students in the state of Arizona lack sufficient access to internet services. The proposed AUSF rules will make broadband more accessible to rural Arizona and help grow the state's economy.

Commissioner Andy Tobin and Boyd Dunn were the push behind adjusting the decades-old Arizona Universal Service Fund in order to raise \$8 million dollars. Government leaders were able to add that to the \$3 million allocated in the state's fiscal year 2017-2018 budget, meaning \$11 million state dollars will go to broadband infrastructure. Those funds can be used to get federal matches which could reach upwards of \$100 million for Arizona.

A second part of the program includes creating a new statewide broadband map of carriers and their service areas to help identify the schools and libraries that are most in need. Emergency rule-making and expedited action was necessary for the remaining schools and libraries in Arizona without internet connectivity to take advantage of this new program.

"There is so much promise now for the future of rural communities who simply are at a disadvantage because they don't have the same access to broadband," said Commissioner Tobin. "I want to thank Governor Ducey, Superintendent Douglas, my fellow Commissioners, Secretary of State Reagan, Director Craig Brown from the Arizona Department of Administration, and Arizona Department of Transportation Director John Halikowski for partnering and sharing the vision that will change the future for so many students and their communities."

This federal program is of limited duration. To apply for the program, schools can contact the Arizona Department of Education or the non-profit *EducationSuperhighway*, which is assisting schools submitting their paperwork. Contact Milan Eaton at milan.eaton@azed.gov or Jess Stein at Jess.stein@educationsuperhighway.org. You can watch a video on how the program works by clicking here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jovl93vHsJs>.

The oral proceeding will take place in Hearing Room 1 at the Arizona Corporation Commission, 1200 W. Washington Street, Phoenix. The public is invited to attend and make comments which will become part of the official record. It will also be broadcast on the Commission's website at <http://www.azcc.gov/livebroadcast>.

Established by Article 15 of the state's constitution, the Arizona Corporation Commission is responsible for the regulation of public utilities and the oversight of incorporation or registration of companies wishing to do business in Arizona. Additionally, the Commission registers and oversees securities offerings and dealers, and enforces railroad and pipeline safety. The five commissioners who make up the Commission are elected by the people of Arizona for a four-year term, with the option of serving for two consecutive terms. To learn more about the Arizona Corporation Commission and its Commissioners, visit <http://www.azcc.gov>.

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