

Attachment A

Questions Concerning Appropriate Universal Service Policies in Washington

Docket UT-100562

1. What is the role of the public switched telecommunications network operated by incumbent local exchange carriers (ILECs) in providing universal service in the state of Washington?
2. Does the UTC need to address intrastate switched access rates to ensure universal service and the widespread availability of telecommunications services at reasonable rates in Washington? What statutory or rule changes are needed in order to do so?
3. Should there be a Washington Universal Service Fund (WUSF)? If so, what factors should the State of Washington consider in weighing the need for establishing a WUSF? Commenting parties are encouraged to address the following factors:
 - a. trending reductions to incumbent carrier's intrastate access charge revenues,
 - b. the need for comprehensive or streamlined earnings review including determination of the effective intrastate or overall rates of return of recipients of WUSF funding,
 - c. revenues from regulated services,
 - d. revenues from both regulated and unregulated services,
 - e. carrier of last resort obligations of potential WUSF recipients,
 - f. any other factors that should be used in determining the need for establishing a WUSF.
4. What is the role of the National Broadband Plan in evaluating the need for a WUSF? If Congress and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) implement the recommendations in the National Broadband Plan, what would be the role of a state USF? What are the possible effects on Washington consumers of the changes to federal rules contemplated in the National Broadband Plan if there is no state universal service fund? Does the National Broadband Plan alleviate or intensify the need for Washington to address intrastate access charge reform and universal service issues at this time?

5. If the UTC addresses intrastate access charge reform, to what extent is there a need for a WUSF to replace some or all intrastate access charge revenues of ILECs in order to preserve and advance the telecommunications network in the State of Washington? Are statutory changes necessary in order to do so?
6. What direct benefits, if any, will there be to consumers in Washington by addressing intrastate switched access and universal service reform? If intrastate access charge reform is implemented, how will access charge cost reductions realized by current interexchange carriers in Washington be flowed through to Washington consumers?
7. Should intrastate switched access reform apply to all providers of intrastate switched access in Washington? What statutory or rule changes would be necessary?
8. Assuming implementation of the National Broadband Plan, is there a need for a state WUSF during the period in which federal universal service support transitions to support for broadband?
9. If a WUSF is established, what should be the criteria for eligibility to draw from the fund? How should the size of the fund be determined? What should be the basis of the amount of support to be received?
10. What, if any, is an appropriate contribution basis for a WUSF? To what extent should other telecommunications providers, including wireless and VoIP service providers (nomadic and fixed) contribute to a WUSF? If so, on what basis should they contribute?
11. What is the role of carrier of last resort in a state universal service fund? Should any carrier that receives support from the universal service fund be required to assume the obligations of carrier of last resort with respect to traditional voice services, with respect to broadband service, or both? Should the fund support more than one provider per geographic area? How should "area" be defined?
12. Should a state universal service fund include a local rate benchmark? If so, for what purpose and how should it be determined?
13. Should there be a transition period from the current state universal service mechanism to a new WUSF? If so, how long should the transition period be?
14. Currently intrastate universal service support consists of at least two elements that are incorporated into intrastate access charges billed to intrastate interexchange carriers (the Universal Service rate element that is billed by all LECs on both originating and terminating intrastate interexchange usage and the Interim Terminating Access Charge (ITAC) that is billed only on terminating minutes by some carriers but not all). The administration of the traditional USF is currently performed by the Washington Exchange

Carrier Association (WECA); but the LECs each administer their own ITACs. Should WECA continue to administer all of the ITACs in conjunction with the Traditional USF? Should WECA continue to administer any USF (traditional or otherwise)? Should the WECA Board be expanded to include the interests of contributors?

15. In designating entities to be eligible for WUSF funding, should there be an eligible telecom carrier (ETC) designation process that is distinct from the existing federal ETC designation process, or should they be combined?
16. What other kind of oversight, if any, should the UTC have over administration of the WUSF?