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## Media Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Date: June 10, 2020**

### **PUC ALLOCATED \$3.5 MILLION TO EXPAND ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE TELEPHONE AND BROADBAND SERVICE FOR LOW-INCOME OREGONIANS**

**SALEM, Ore.** – The Oregon Public Utility Commission (PUC) was allocated \$3.5 million for the Oregon Lifeline Program to temporarily increase the discount on telephone or high-speed internet service for low-income households in Oregon. These funds are a portion of the \$247 million in federal Coronavirus Relief Fund dollars allocated to support Oregonians and small businesses impacted by the pandemic.

“The Oregon Lifeline program makes communication more affordable and accessible for those who may be experiencing financial hardships,” said Megan Decker, PUC Chair. “These additional funds will increase the discount for families, making telephone and broadband service more affordable during these unprecedented times.”

Oregon Lifeline, a federal and state government program, typically provides a discount up to \$12.75 per month on telephone or high-speed internet service with participating companies. With this additional funding, the discount will be up to \$21.25 per month for these services for six months starting July 1, 2020, with the goal of providing financial relief for up to 8,000 more low-income households.

Oregonians receiving benefits from select public assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or Medicaid may qualify. Residents may also qualify if their total household income is at or below 135 percent of federal poverty guidelines.

For additional information about the Oregon Lifeline program or to request an application, call 800-848-4442, weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., email at [puc.rspf@state.or.us](mailto:puc.rspf@state.or.us) or visit [www.lifeline.oregon.gov](http://www.lifeline.oregon.gov).

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*The Oregon Public Utility Commission (PUC) regulates customer rates and services of the state’s investor-owned electric, natural gas and telephone utilities, as well as select water companies. The PUC mission is to ensure Oregon utility customers have access to safe, reliable, and high quality utility services at just and reasonable rates, which is accomplished through thorough analysis and independent decision-making conducted in an open and fair process.*