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NEWS RELEASE

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LETTER/OP-ED REGARDING THE LIFELINE AND LINK-UP PROGRAMS FOR TELEPHONE CUSTOMERS ON LIMITED INCOMES

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Sept. 15, 2009) – EDITORS: Please consider using the following as a letter to the editor or op-ed piece in conjunction with Kentucky Lifeline Awareness Week. It may be used immediately, with authorship credited as indicated.

To the Editors:

Telephone service has evolved a great deal over the years and has become an integral part of all of our lives. Whether it is traditional telephone service or, increasingly, wireless telephone service, staying connected to family, friends, clients, co-workers and others is important.

Today, many Kentuckians are facing financial hardships as a result of the downturn in the economy. Many older Kentuckians are on fixed incomes and there are also many families who have lost jobs or income who for the first time face financial challenges. For many low-income Kentuckians, there is help to stay connected through programs known as Lifeline (not to be confused with a medical alert program with a similar name) and Link-up.

The qualifications for telephone Link-up and Lifeline are the same. You can qualify if you presently receive Food Stamps, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). You may also qualify if you participate in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) or the National Free School Lunch program or live in Federal Public Housing/Section 8.

Link-up will pay half of the installation charges for new telephone service, to a maximum of \$30.00. Lifeline will provide a discount of up to \$13.50 per month on the local service portion of your telephone bill. Your local telephone service provider will be able to assist you in selecting a service plan to meet your needs. These programs provide discounts only for the primary telephone in a household.

If you think you qualify, you can call your local telephone service provider directly and receive instructions on how to apply. You can also find further information on Link-up and Lifeline programs on the Kentucky Public Service Commission's Web site at <http://psc.ky.gov/agencies/psc/consumer/lifeline.pdf>.

Governor Beshear has proclaimed September 14 – 20, 2009 as Lifeline Awareness Week. If you know of someone that may benefit from these programs, please help spread the word. Staying connected is important today, especially if you and your family are experiencing financial challenges. There is help to stay connected. Please use it.

Sincerely,

David L. Armstrong, Chairman
Kentucky Public Service Commission

Jack Conway
Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Kentucky

Forest Skaggs, Executive Director
Kentucky Telephone Association