

To the Editors:

Telecommunications options continue to evolve in ways that provide Kentucky consumers with more choices to meet their needs. These positive changes make it easier to stay connected, but we must ensure that every Kentuckian has affordable options to communicate with family, friends, healthcare providers, employers and more.

While there have been some improvements to the economy over the past year, many are still facing financial challenges. Many older Kentuckians are on fixed incomes and others face challenges due to unemployment or underemployment. To help low-income Kentuckians stay connected, the Link-up and Lifeline (not to be confused with a medical alert program with a similar name) programs may help.

You may qualify for Link-up and/or Lifeline if you presently receive Food Stamps, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). You may also qualify for Link-up and/or Lifeline 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 up to a maximum of \$30. Lifeline will provide a discount of up to \$13.50 per month on the local service portion of your telephone bill. Lifeline and Link-up programs provide discounts only for the primary telephone in a household. If you think you qualify, contact your local telephone service provider to assist you in selecting a service plan that meets your needs and to receive instructions on how to apply. You can obtain more information about the Link-up and Lifeline programs at the Kentucky Public Service Commission's website at <http://psc.ky.gov/agencies/psc/consumer/lifeline.pdf>.

Governor Beshear has proclaimed September 13 – 19, 2010 as Lifeline Awareness Week. Please help us spread the word to those who may qualify. These programs are intended to help those in need to stay connected. It is our hope that those who qualify and need these programs will reach out to use them.

Sincerely,
David L. Armstrong, Chairman
Kentucky Public Service Commission

Jack Conway
Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Kentucky

Forest M. Skaggs, Executive Director
Kentucky Telephone Association