



FCC Overview



Internet Society Webinar

October 9, 2019

NOTE: THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS PRESENTATION ARE THOSE OF THE AUTHOR AND MAY NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION, ITS CHAIRMAN OR COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA

- **Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Organization**
 - Agency mission, governance, and structure
 - Regulatory authority and rulemaking process
 - Public input – written filings and meetings
- **Universal Service Fund Support**
- **Tribal Engagement and Initiatives**
 - Office of Native Affairs and Policy (ONAP)
 - Native Nations Communications Task Force
 - Rulemakings of interest
 - Tribal-specific broadband initiatives

FCC ORGANIZATION

THE FCC'S MISSION

- The Federal Communications Commission is an independent government agency overseen by Congress
- Its mission includes:
 - Implementing and enforcing America's communications law and regulations
 - Regulating interstate and international communications by wire and radio in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories
 - Covering wireline and wireless services, satellite, broadcast TV and radio, and cable TV

FCC GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE

- **Five Commissioners**

- President nominates; Senate confirms
- Appointed to fill five-year terms
- No more than three from the same political party; President selects one Commissioner to be Chair

- **Divided into Bureaus and Offices**

- 7 Bureaus: Wireless, Wireline, International, Enforcement, Consumer and Governmental Affairs, Media, Public Safety
- 10 Offices: *e.g.*, General Counsel, Legislative Affairs, Managing Director, Engineering and Technology

FCC REGULATORY AUTHORITY

- FCC establishes and enforces rules based on the substantive areas outlined in the Communications Act
 - The structure of the Act broadly mirrors the agency's Bureau organization, *e.g.*, wireline, wireless, media and international
 - The Enforcement Bureau ensures the compliance of licensees, permittees, and other regulated entities
- The FCC also adopts rules and policies administered by certain outside entities
 - The FCC adopts the rules and policies governing the Universal Service Fund (USF), as authorized by Congress
 - The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) administers the USF programs and funding

FCC RULEMAKING PROCESS

- Rulemaking is a process for developing and issuing rules and regulations
- Once adopted, these rules and regulations establish the framework governing providers, including wireline and wireless services
- A top priority of FCC rulemaking activity is closing the digital divide and promoting broadband deployment nationwide

PUBLIC INPUT

- **Notice and comment rulemaking process**

- The FCC depends on public comment to evaluate proposals and provide record support for rules
- The record is public to promote transparency
- FCC wants widespread input and different perspectives

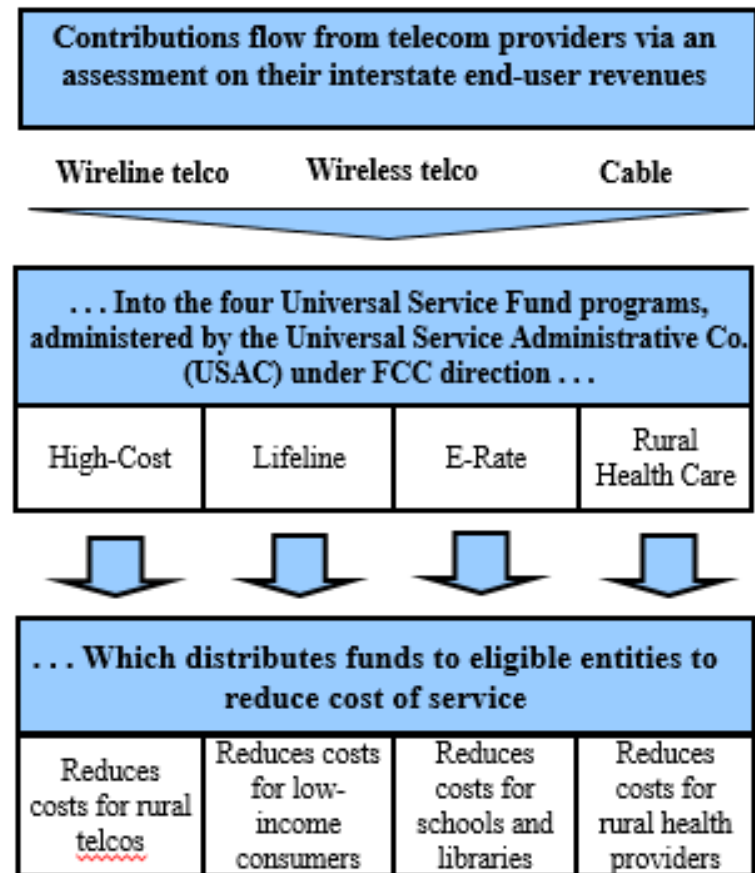
- **How to provide input**

- Written comments: share perspectives and help shape policies and rules; formal comments preserve appeal rights
- In-person meetings: meetings with Commissioners and staff can supplement formal comments; substance must be summarized in writing in public *ex parte* filings
- Comments and *ex parte* filings can be made and accessed online at: <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/>

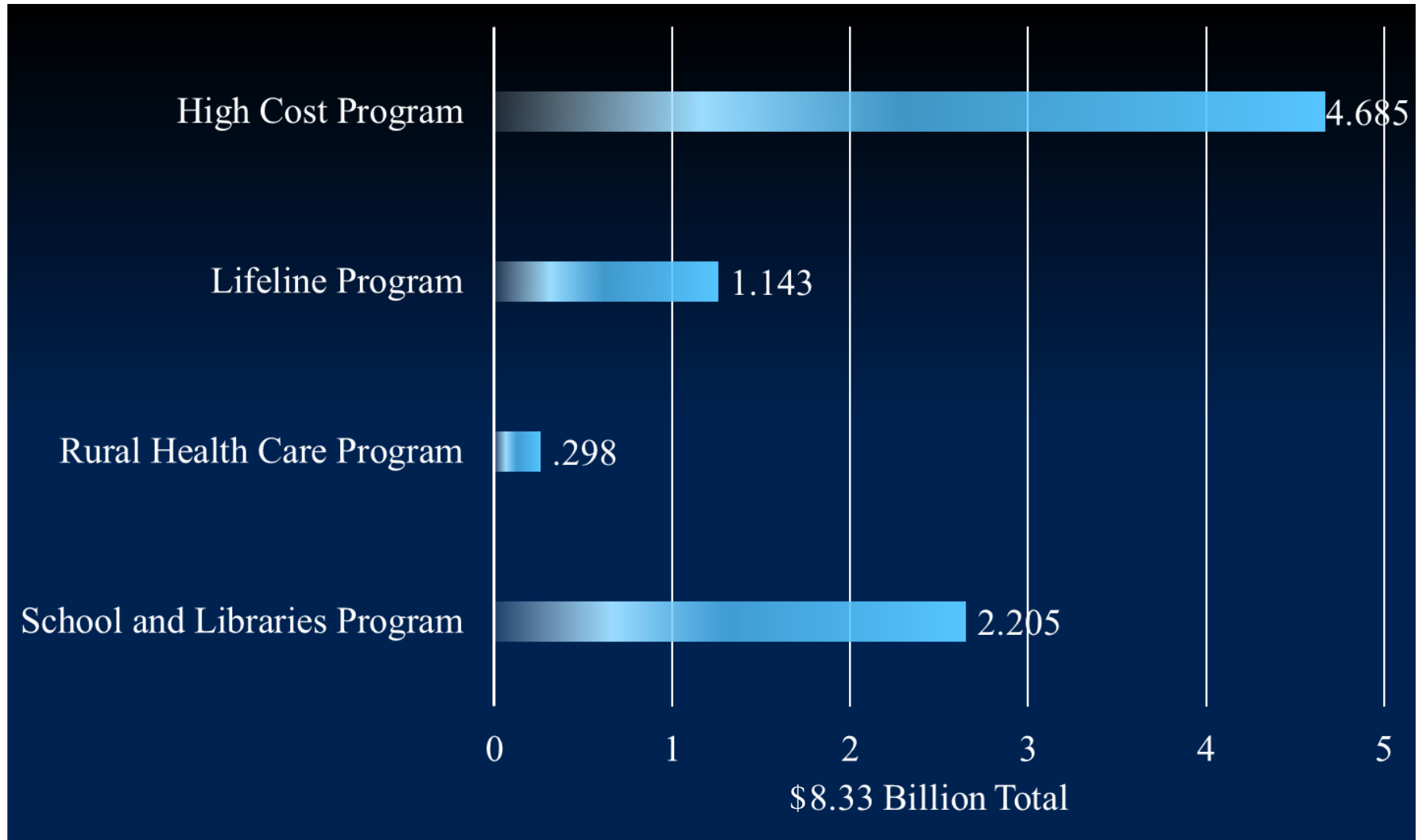
UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND SUPPORT

USF BASICS

- “Universal service” – the availability of affordable, reliable telecommunications service nationwide – is a fundamental goal of federal telecom law
- USF established in 1997 to subsidize telecom services for low-income consumers, rural health care providers, schools and libraries, and consumers in high-cost areas
- Congressional authority in section 254(b) of the Communications Act



2018 AUTHORIZED USF SUPPORT



TRIBAL INITIATIVES AND ENGAGEMENT

OFFICE OF NATIVE AFFAIRS AND POLICY

- ONAP created by the Commission in 2010
- Part of Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau's oversight of inter-governmental affairs
- Charged with bringing the benefits of modern communications infrastructure to all Native communities

ONAP'S MISSION

- Ensuring robust government-to-government consultation with federally recognized Tribal governments
- Working within the Commission, as well as with other government agencies and private organizations, to develop and implement policies for assisting Native communities
- Ensuring Native concerns and voices are considered in all relevant Commission proceedings and initiatives
- Representing the Commission's positions on matters of interest to Tribal entities

NATIVE NATIONS COMMUNICATIONS TASK FORCE

- Latest version formed in November 2018
 - 3 year term with meetings twice annually plus regular conference calls
 - 17 Tribal and 8 FCC members represent a diversity of views and expertise
- Tasked with providing guidance, expertise, and recommendations on issues affecting Tribal governments and people
- Input intended to inform and advance the Commission's efforts to close the digital divide affecting Indian country

RULEMAKINGS OF TRIBAL INTEREST

- **Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF)**
 - Proposed \$20.4 billion investment in high-speed broadband networks in rural America over 10 years
 - Intended to connect up to four million rural homes and small businesses to high-speed broadband networks.
 - Funding through a reverse auction to service providers that deploy up to gigabit-speed networks

RULEMAKINGS OF TRIBAL INTEREST

- **Digital Opportunity Data Collection**

- Looking at new ways of developing geospatial broadband coverage maps from Internet service providers, and collecting public input on the accuracy of these maps
- Soliciting comment on new ways to:
 - Refine digital mapping reporting, include location-specific fixed broadband deployment data, and
 - Ensure the accuracy and reliability of mobile wireless voice and broadband coverage data

RULEMAKINGS OF TRIBAL INTEREST

- **Connected Care Pilot**

- Seeks comment on a proposed \$100 million Connected Care pilot program to support bringing telehealth services to low-income patients and veterans
- General comment sought on the goals and metrics of the pilot, who should participate, the project application and evaluation processes
- Particular focus on how best to reach geographic areas and populations with documented health care disparities (Tribal lands, rural areas, and Veteran populations)

TRIBAL-SPECIFIC BROADBAND INITIATIVES

- **2.5 GHz Tribal Priority Window** - for new Educational Broadband Service licenses over rural Tribal lands
- **Tribal Broadband Factors** – proposal in RDOF proceeding to increase money available to providers to deploy broadband on Tribal lands
- **Tribal Bidding Credit** – comment sought in the RDOF proceeding as incentive for carriers to bid on and serve Tribal lands
- **Tribal Lands Application Points** – proposed in the Connected Care Pilot proceeding for projects seeking to address areas with documented health discrepancies

QUESTIONS?