

1 AN ACT concerning telecommunications.

2 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
3 represented in the General Assembly:

4 Section 5. The Public Utilities Act is amended by
5 changing Section 13-301.1 as follows:

6 (220 ILCS 5/13-301.1) (from Ch. 111 2/3, par. 13-301.1)
7 Sec. 13-301.1. Universal Telephone Service Assistance
8 Program.

9 (a) The Commission shall by rule or regulation establish
10 a Universal Telephone Service Assistance Program for low
11 income residential customers. The program shall provide for a
12 reduction of access line charges, a reduction of connection
13 charges, or any other alternative to increase accessibility
14 to telephone service that the Commission deems advisable
15 subject to the availability of funds for the program as
16 provided in subsection (g)(b). The Commission shall
17 establish eligibility requirements for benefits under the
18 program.

19 (b) The Commission shall adopt rules prohibiting a
20 telecommunications carrier from discontinuing local exchange
21 telecommunications service to a consumer who receives
22 lifeline service because of nonpayment by the consumer of
23 charges for other services billed by the carrier, including
24 long distance service.

25 (c) The Commission shall adopt rules providing for
26 automatic enrollment to receive lifeline service for eligible
27 consumers. The Department of Human Services, Department of
28 Public Aid, and Department of Commerce and Community Affairs,
29 on request of the Commission, shall assist in the adoption
30 and implementation of those rules. The Commission and the
31 Department of Human Services, Department of Public Aid, and

1 Department of Commerce and Community Affairs may enter into
2 memorandums of understanding establishing the respective
3 duties of the Commission and the Departments in relation to
4 the automatic enrollment.

5 (d) A telecommunications carrier may block a lifeline
6 service participant's access to all long distance service
7 except toll-free numbers when the participant owes an
8 outstanding amount for that service. The telecommunications
9 carrier shall remove the block without additional cost to the
10 participant upon payment of the outstanding amount.

11 (e) A telecommunications carrier shall offer a consumer
12 who applies for or receives lifeline service the option of
13 blocking all toll calls or, if technically capable, placing a
14 limit on the amount of toll calls. The carrier may not
15 charge the consumer an administrative charge or other
16 additional amount for the blocking service.

17 (f) In this Section, "lifeline service" means a retail
18 local service offering described by 47 C.F.R. Section
19 54.401(a), as amended.

20 (g) (b) The Commission shall require by rule or
21 regulation that each telecommunications carrier providing
22 local exchange telecommunications services notify its
23 customers that if the customer wishes to participate in the
24 funding of the Universal Telephone Service Assistance Program
25 he may do so by electing to contribute, on a monthly basis, a
26 fixed amount that will be included in the customer's monthly
27 bill. The customer may cease contributing at any time upon
28 providing notice to the telecommunications carrier providing
29 local exchange telecommunications services. The notice shall
30 state that any contribution made will not reduce the
31 customer's bill for telecommunications services. Failure to
32 remit the amount of increased payment will reduce the
33 contribution accordingly. The Commission shall specify the
34 monthly fixed amount or amounts that customers wishing to

1 contribute to the funding of the Universal Telephone Service
2 Assistance Program may choose from in making their
3 contributions. Every telecommunications carrier providing
4 local exchange telecommunications services shall remit the
5 amounts contributed in accordance with the terms of the
6 Universal Telephone Service Assistance Program.

7 (Source: P.A. 87-750; 90-372, eff. 7-1-98.)