

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
OF THE  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COMMISSIONER JOHN REYNOLDS, in attendance

COMMISSIONER DARCIE HOUCK, in attendance

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE THOMAS J. GLEGOLA, presiding

Order Instituting Rulemaking Proceeding	)	PUBLIC
to Consider Changes to the Commission's	)	PARTICIPATION
Carrier of Last Resort Rules.	)	HEARING
	)	
	)	Rulemaking
	)	24-06-012



**FILED**  
05/09/25  
12:09 PM  
R2406012

REPORTERS' TRANSCRIPT  
Santa Rosa, California  
April 30, 2025  
Pages 343 - 429  
Volume 6

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SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA

APRIL 30, 2025 - 2:03 P.M.

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ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE GLEGOLA: Good afternoon, everyone. We're on the record. The Commission will come to order. Today is April 30th, 2025. This is the time and place for one of two public participation hearings today for Rulemaking 24-06-012.

In this proceeding, the Commission is considering whether there's a need to update its Carrier of Last Resort rules, which were adopted in 1996 and updated slightly in 2012. We're also concerned with what these revisions should be if any.

As a reminder, this is not about AT&T's application to withdraw as Carrier of Last Resort. The Commission dismissed that application last year.

Today's public participation hearing, or "PPH," as we sometimes call them, are being held in the Santa Rosa City Counsel chambers. I very much want to thank the City of Santa Rosa for allowing us to use this room today. I also want to make sure that everyone in attendance understands that the purpose of today's meeting is to hear from the public, no action will be taken today.

My name is Thomas J. Glegola, I am the assigned

1 administrative law judge for this proceeding. The  
2 Honorable John Reynolds, to my left, is the assigned  
3 commissioner. We also have the Honorable Darcie Houck,  
4 to my right. She is another commissioner at the Public  
5 Utilities Commission.

6 Commissioner Reynolds, would you like to make  
7 some opening remarks.

8 COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: Yes. Thank you,  
9 Judge Glegola.

10 Good afternoon, everyone. I'm the assigned  
11 commissioner for the Carrier of Last Resort Rulemaking,  
12 which is the rulemaking for which we're here and  
13 gathered to hear your public comments. Thank you all  
14 for joining us today at the public participation  
15 hearing.

16 I also want to thank our PUC staff, the Public  
17 Advisor's Office, our court reporters, and everyone at  
18 the PUC who is helping to ensure that today's event goes  
19 smoothly. I would also like to echo the thanks to the  
20 City of Santa Rosa for hosting here us today.

21 I understand Judge Glegola will go over some of  
22 the matters of today's event in some additional detail,  
23 but I'd like to start with providing some background on  
24 the California Public Utilities Commission, which I may  
25 also call the "Commission" or the "CPUC" or the "PUC,"

1 and the Carrier of Last Resort rules. Sometimes I might  
2 use the acronym "COLR," "C-O-L-R" for "Carrier of Last  
3 Resort."

4 The CPUC is a public agency that regulates  
5 Public Utilities in California spanning across the  
6 energy, water, and telecommunications industries. The  
7 Commission is headed by five commissioners with each  
8 commissioner serving a six-year staggered term. As a  
9 commissioner, I'm assigned to a variety of cases,  
10 including this rulemaking.

11 As for these Carrier of Last Resort rules, they  
12 originated in the 1990s. In 1994, the state legislature  
13 tasked the PUC with ensuring universal telecommunication  
14 service, including essential telecommunications services  
15 be provided at affordable prices to all Californians.

16 In response, the Commission decided to  
17 designate existing incumbent telephone providers, like  
18 AT&T, in each service territory to be what we call  
19 "Carriers of Last Resort."

20 So what is a Carrier of Last Resort? It's a  
21 telecom service provider that stands ready to provide  
22 basic service to any customer requesting that service  
23 within a specified area, consistent with that universal  
24 service policy. This created what is known as our  
25 Carrier of Last Resort rules and requirements specific

1 to these telecom providers.

2 Among a number of things, the rules require  
3 that one telephone or telecommunications company in a  
4 specified area is legally required to provide access to  
5 basic service to anyone in its service territory who  
6 requests it.

7 Basic service contains nine different elements,  
8 including the ability to call 911, to receive  
9 voice-grade quality service over long distances, and to  
10 receive low-income discounts on service like Lifeline.

11 This means that Carriers of Last Resort cannot  
12 withdraw from its obligations, unless another carrier  
13 takes on the requirements of the Carrier of Last Resort.

14 Currently, every California household is served  
15 by a Carrier of Last Resort. There are 16 different  
16 companies designated across California with distinct  
17 service territories. AT&T is the largest and Frontier  
18 is the second largest.

19 Today most Carriers of Last Resort provide  
20 basic service on landline-telephone networks; however,  
21 when you talk about basic service, I do want to  
22 emphasize that this does not necessarily mean that the  
23 particular phone service that you use or the service  
24 that you receive is a basic service or that it is served  
25 by landline, copper or fiber-optic wirelines. Your home

1 service, for example, may be provided the Voice over  
2 Internet Protocol, or VoIP, connection.

3 This rulemaking is evaluating possible changes  
4 and updates to the rules so that they are as effective  
5 and relevant today as possible, given the technological  
6 changes and the changes in law that have occurred in the  
7 past 30-plus years in providing communication service,  
8 while also ensuring that no one is disadvantaged due to  
9 a change in the Carrier of Last Resort rules, and that  
10 Californians have access to affordable, safe and  
11 reliable phone service.

12 Changes to the rules could potentially affect  
13 the conditions of Carrier of Last Resort withdrawal and  
14 who provides basic service for a customer if a customer  
15 does use basic service.

16 A company that is no longer designated as a  
17 Carrier of Last Resort could stop providing basic  
18 service. Any changes to the Carrier of Last Resort  
19 rules; however, will not diminish the Commission's  
20 commitment to ensuring that all Californians, no matter  
21 their income or location, have access to essential  
22 communication services that are affordable, safe and  
23 reliable as codified in the statute.

24 I acknowledge that most Californians today do  
25 not rely on basic voice services typically provided on

1 Plain Old Telephone Service or landline telephone  
2 service, and are, instead, moving to more  
3 data-intensive, internet-based services on cell phones  
4 or broadband. These require support from public and  
5 private investment in modern, higher-bandwidth  
6 communications infrastructure.

7 That said, we do currently have a  
8 100-plus-year-old legacy telephone network  
9 infrastructure that is already everywhere in the state  
10 and that has been used and continues to be used to  
11 provide universal phone service.

12 While we have added significant investment in  
13 newer networks, the physical infrastructure of the  
14 legacy telephone network -- its poles, conduit and  
15 rights-of-way -- have contributed to delivering, and  
16 still deliver, universal communications service to  
17 Californians.

18 Sometimes this service on the legacy network is  
19 the most reliable form of communication service for  
20 residents in certain areas where the cell phone service  
21 and broadband internet is not readily available or  
22 accessible.

23 I will note that our Carrier of Last Resort  
24 rules are designed to be technology-neutral, and it has  
25 not been our expectation that Carriers of Last Resort



1 serve customers through copper networks, though we have  
2 seen carriers choose that technology to deliver service.

3 In this rulemaking, the Commission's  
4 fundamental goal is that all Californians have access to  
5 reliable, high-quality telecommunication services for  
6 safety, critical communication, and their broader  
7 connectivity needs no matter their income or where they  
8 live, including high-fire-threat, disaster-prone, rural,  
9 remote and underserved areas.

10 I'll turn briefly to, What is the purpose of  
11 today's hearing, the public participation hearing?

12 The purpose of these hearings is for the  
13 Commission to hear directly from customers or concerned  
14 Californians about the issues in the scope of this  
15 proceeding, including the issues I just discussed.

16 Today's comments, in addition to the comments  
17 made in all of the public participation hearings that we  
18 have been holding, will help the Commission evaluate  
19 whether and what changes we should make to the rules  
20 that make sense in today's reality of the telephone  
21 communications landscape.

22 It's crucial for our decision-making process  
23 that we hear from customers on these issues, and I want  
24 to thank you all for joining us to provide your input  
25 and concerns this afternoon.

1           We've also been currently holding workshops  
2 where we are engaging in discussion with the parties of  
3 this proceeding on specific, focused topics at issue in  
4 this case about the various specific proposals for  
5 changes to the rules that the parties have put forward.

6           We've also heard directly from tribal, public  
7 safety, rural county and representatives from other  
8 states about their perspectives and lessons learned.

9           These workshops have been recorded and will be  
10 available for public viewing on the PUC's home website  
11 or YouTube page. Parties will also provide comments and  
12 reply comments on these workshops once they've  
13 concluded.

14           So where are we in these cases? Once we  
15 conclude these hearings, the PUC's Communication's  
16 Division staff will create a staff proposal on how, if  
17 at all, we should change the COLR rules and any other  
18 recommendations or key findings for the Commission's  
19 consideration of the CPUC rules. That should come later  
20 this year after the summer.

21           Parties will then file comments and reply  
22 comments on the staff proposal for the Commission's  
23 consideration. We may also hold evidentiary hearings,  
24 if requested, at our San Francisco hearing rooms,  
25 although at this time, we've not had a request for

1 evidentiary hearings.

2 After comments on the staff proposal and  
3 hearings, if they do occur, the parties will file briefs  
4 and reply briefs, and after all that process,  
5 Judge Glegola will issue a proposed decision for the  
6 Commission to consider at one of its official meetings.

7 All of these milestones, along with the scope  
8 of issues, are available on the scoping ruling on our  
9 Docket Card for this proceeding, R.24-06-012, which is  
10 available on the Commission's website.

11 If anyone is interested in getting  
12 notifications about the continued events in this  
13 proceeding or becoming a party, please contact the  
14 Public Adviser's Office representative at the table  
15 where you signed up to speak today.

16 Subsequent dates for milestones in this  
17 proceeding have yet to be determined and no decision has  
18 yet been made about what changes, if any, to make in our  
19 rules. No changes can occur without a vote on the  
20 proposed decision that is supported by the majority of  
21 the five commissioners.

22 With all that said, I'll turn back to Judge  
23 Glegola, and I'm looking forward to hearing from  
24 everyone. Thank you, again.

25 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you, Commissioner Reynolds.

1 Commissioner Houck, do you have any comments?

2 COMMISSIONER HOUCK: Thank you, Judge Glegola.

3 I want to thank Commissioner Reynolds for his  
4 leadership in this proceeding. It's very critical that  
5 we have rules in place that are going to serve all  
6 Californians and make sure that you're connected to  
7 telecommunications services.

8 I want to thank Judge Glegola for managing the  
9 proceeding and all of his work, our staff who are here  
10 today, our court reporters.

11 I want to thank the City of Roseville (sic) and  
12 I want to acknowledge, again, our Public Advisor's  
13 Office that is up by the door, and if folks want to  
14 comment, make sure you put your name on list there.

15 I also want to reiterate, as Commissioner  
16 Reynolds indicated, this rulemaking is about revising  
17 our Carrier of Last Resort rules. It's not about  
18 whether any particular carrier, such as AT&T, should be  
19 alleviated of their responsibilities.

20 So these rules haven't been revised since the  
21 1990s. A lot has happened in the last 30 years. So  
22 this proceeding is about taking a good look at what  
23 changes or modifications may be needed to ensure that  
24 we're better serving all Californians and making sure  
25 that telecommunications services are available in the

1 best possible way for everyone.

2 And as was stated by both Judge Glegola and  
3 Commissioner Reynolds, today's hearing is about hearing  
4 from all of you. I want to thank you for being here.  
5 It's really critical that the Commission hears from the  
6 public, understands what your concerns are, hears what  
7 you've been grappling with.

8 And with that, I'll turn it back over to  
9 Judge Glegola and look forward to hearing from all of  
10 you today.

11 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you, Commissioner Houck.

12 If anyone in the audience would like more  
13 details about this proceeding, you can get a fact sheet  
14 at the sign-in table. The fact sheet is also available  
15 on our website at [www.cpuc.ca.gov/PPH](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PPH).

16 There's also more information on our main  
17 webpage, [www.cpuc.ca.gov](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov). Again, that's [cpuc.ca.gov](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov).

18 And if you scroll down to the bottom of the  
19 third page, you'll see a link that you can click on.

20 As both commissioners mentioned, we're early on  
21 in this proceeding. We are, essentially, in  
22 fact-finding mode. In total, we've had five in-person  
23 meetings like this one. Earlier this month, we were in  
24 San Diego county, as well as Los Angeles and  
25 Bakersfield. Last week, we were in Roseville and Placer

1 county, and in each location, we've have had a 2:00 p.m.  
2 meeting as well as a 6:00 p.m. one.

3 We also have four remote hearings scheduled:  
4 One was the afternoon of April 17th, another one is  
5 scheduled for the evening of May 5th beginning at 6:00  
6 p.m., and a final two are scheduled for May 13th, one  
7 starting 2:00 p.m., one starting at 6:00 p.m.

8 So if you're interested in participating, then  
9 you're more than welcome. If you want to let friends  
10 know, of course, please do.

11 And if you're looking for other ways to  
12 participate in this hearing, you can also submit  
13 comments electronically, by mail, and I would just urge  
14 you, if you are interested, to speak with the individual  
15 at the reception table, and they can give you  
16 information, including our Public Advisor's phone  
17 number.

18 So with that, we are going to turn to the  
19 public portion of our meeting. Your comments will help  
20 the Commission gather information to determine what to  
21 do. As I mentioned before, in addition to considering  
22 the comments we receive here today, we also will  
23 consider comments received electronically or by other  
24 means.

25 Before hearing from you, I want to go over a

1 couple of ground rules:

2 One, our court reporters will be transcribing  
3 everything that is said today. So please remember to  
4 speak slowly and clearly.

5 Please speak close to the microphone. Please  
6 use that podium, and please don't interrupt people.

7 I know I can't stop people from applauding, but  
8 please don't boo if you disagree. The applauding will  
9 just mean it will take a little bit longer.

10 After this public participation hearing is  
11 over, the court reporters will prepare a written  
12 transcript of this hearing. The transcript will be  
13 provided to myself, to all five commissioners, and will  
14 be available to the public and posted on the Docket  
15 Card.

16 So as of right now, we have 20-some people that  
17 are signed up to speak. For now, let's, if we could,  
18 limit our comments to three minutes, but I may need to  
19 change that if more people come in. I want to be  
20 respectful of everyone's time. I know people want to  
21 speak, but I also know some people may have other stuff  
22 to do. They may have two-hour parking. There's a lot  
23 of things that they may have.

24 So our first speaker is Steve Hajik, and  
25 apologies if I mispronounced that.

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STATEMENT OF SPEAKER HAJIK

I live in Willits, California. The city of Willits has internet service, cell phone service, everything. I live just off Setting Woods. It is a redwood, doug fir canyon. We have no cell service. We have no internet service, and it's a life line to us because four years ago, fire came within a couple miles away from the house. If it wasn't for our neighbors telling us that there was a fire coming, we would have stayed at the house.

So in summary, our phone is a lifeline to emergency services that we need. Thank you.

ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you very much. I appreciate your comments.

Our next speaker is Les James.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER JAMES

Hello. My name is Les James. I live in Sonoma county. I'm a small business owner, and I really understand that when a system is out of shape and failing, we must upgrade.

Throwing money into something that is on its way out makes no sense. It is important for all of California to invest in modern communications. Everyone should have access to reliable, fast, affordable internet. Thank you for your time.



1 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

2 Our next speaker is Leslie Taillandier.

3 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER TAILLANDIER

4 Good afternoon, Judge Glegola and the other  
5 CPUC commissioners. My name is Leslie Taillandier and  
6 live in San Francisco.

7 AT&T is pushing to terminate traditional copper  
8 landline phone service. Assembly Bill 470 is opposed by  
9 the California State Association of Counties, but has  
10 full corporate support from the telecom industry, the  
11 industry behind the bill.

12 AB 470 does not require third party reviews or  
13 regulatory oversight, thus allowing telecom free rein.  
14 The City of Calabasas, Mayor Peter Kraut, said, quote:  
15 AB 470 is leaving communities disconnected and that's  
16 something we cannot afford, particularly when it comes  
17 to emergency services and public safety, unquote.

18 Every county in California faces the same  
19 situation. The County of San Francisco's emergency  
20 services, the San Francisco Fire Department and the San  
21 Francisco Police Department rely, again rely, on  
22 traditional copper landline phone service as that is  
23 their communication system.

24 San Francisco firefighters told me the  
25 importance of traditional copper landline, and one

1 firefighter was in disbelief at the possibility of not  
2 having a copper landline phone system. Last year when  
3 AT&T cell towers went down, San Francisco emergency  
4 services told people to find a landline.

5 AT&T withdrawing their Carrier of Last Resort  
6 obligations regarding traditional copper landlines could  
7 put the city of San Francisco in great risk during a  
8 citywide emergency. Are you ready for the repercussions  
9 from such an event?

10 AB 470 is a very real threat to public safety.  
11 Just as Californians who want to keep traditional copper  
12 landline phone service, please support the public. We  
13 want to keep our copper landline telephones, period.  
14 Thank you so much for your time. ]

15 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

16 Our next speaker is Sangita Moskow.

17 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER MOSKOW

18 Hi. I'm from San Rafael, California. And the  
19 last big storm we had, I was the only phone in the  
20 neighborhood because I was the only phone that had a  
21 landline. And I'm not sure how that looks now because  
22 the last time my phone went out, the landline didn't  
23 work either because something has happened to the  
24 electricity.

25 But I see on the fact sheet here Carrier of

1 Last Resort. I object to that thinking. I think we  
2 should be thinking of it as carrier of all resorts,  
3 because we're talking about human life. In some cases  
4 life or death, and in all cases harm. It's very harmful  
5 sticking EMFs next to your head.

6 When I did have a cell phone, half of the  
7 situations were situations where I had to stick the  
8 phone up on my head in order to hear because of ambient  
9 noise. So for just general public safety, the landline  
10 is the best thing to do, but all things are good to do.  
11 There's no reason why we have to have just one system.  
12 That's all I would say.

13 Thank you.

14 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

15 Our next speaker is Jennifer LaPorta.

16 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER LAPORTA

17 Hello. My name is Jennifer LaPorta. I have a  
18 background and a degree in environmental health. You  
19 know, this is a no-brainer. Power goes out and even  
20 friends and neighbors who love wireless tech will be  
21 stuck when batteries die with no communication in or  
22 out. No evacuation notices, no emergency notices, no  
23 access to 911, no ability to check on loved ones or to  
24 be checked on especially when needed for those who are  
25 elderly, disabled, or have health problems. No safe

1 communication for those disabled by electromagnetic  
2 sensitivity.

3 Modern tech is not always the best tech. This  
4 trend towards wireless is hurting people. I have a  
5 friend in Oakland who has a landline and then there was,  
6 you know, the trend towards wireless. There's a 5G --  
7 they put up a 5G antenna 50 feet away from his bedroom  
8 window. And a couple years later, he suffered a stroke.  
9 My dear friend the yoga teacher and artist.

10 This is a matter of freedom of choice, a  
11 cornerstone of democracy which is now withering on the  
12 vine. Do we want to keep this freedom of choice? We  
13 the people. We are the people. Please don't be  
14 influenced by the corporations. They are only out for  
15 themselves.

16 But all these meetings you get so many people.  
17 The majority of people there are supporting the copper  
18 landlines, which are the rules in democracy the last  
19 time I looked. Okay.

20 Copper landlines are safe reliable voice  
21 communication under all conditions. The last speaker  
22 was talking about the voice clarity that's required for  
23 people with hearing problems, seniors, disabled. What  
24 other system is entirely free of electromagnetic  
25 radiation and dependable during outages?

1           You might notice my scarf. This is an EMF  
2 blocking scarf because I'm electro sensitive. I have to  
3 wear it just to protect my brain, okay. It's pretty hot  
4 to wear during the summer. It's not comfortable. It's  
5 not a fashion statement. It's not a hijab. It's a EMF  
6 protecting scarf, and I also have a shirt because I'm  
7 sensitive. Please care about people like us.

8           Thank you.

9           ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

10          Our next speaker is Vicki Sievers.

11                         STATEMENT OF SPEAKER SIEVERS

12          I'm a little shorter than Jennifer was or a lot  
13 shorter. Good afternoon. As a culture, we are  
14 conditioned to perceive newer as better, but who has not  
15 experienced that newer may not be better.

16          When my husband told an appliance installer  
17 last month that our washer had served us well for over  
18 20 years, the installer said the next one would maybe  
19 get seven. A case of newer being profitable for  
20 industry but a disservice to the consumer.

21          Will that kind of disservice be the outcome of  
22 this rulemaking proceeding? AT&T is fond of repeating  
23 that copper wire service is antiquated using that term  
24 in a pejorative manner.

25          Telephones must be modernized they insist. But

1     how can anyone refute that legacy telephone connectivity  
2     remains the superior technology for accomplishing the  
3     critical requisite task, which is safe reliable voice  
4     communication under all conditions.

5             No other system device can boast of such. No  
6     other system provides the voice clarity often needed by  
7     seniors and disabled. No other system is entirely free  
8     of electromagnetic radiation and, therefore, safe for my  
9     sensitive friends: Maggie, Sherry, Polly, Steven,  
10    Sandra, Kim, Suty (phonetic), and Jennifer.

11            No other -- many Californians, about three  
12    percent of Californians, a million in California share  
13    this sensitivity, this disability. No other system  
14    remains dependable during outages. Jennifer mentioned  
15    last year when tens of thousands of AT&T users woke up  
16    to outages and emergency response personnel actually  
17    recommended that residents find a landline for making  
18    emergency calls. You'll remember that. I think we told  
19    you that at the Ukiah hearing.

20            Last week I was talking with my younger friend,  
21    Genine, on her Frontier-provided voice over internet  
22    phone when that phone went dead, really dead. Two years  
23    ago Genine went for fibered internet never realizing,  
24    never informed, that she would lose her trusty legacy  
25    phone. "It's been a nightmare," she told me. "God I

1 miss my real landline. Now I have dropped calls,  
2 periodic dead phone, crackling on the line, interference  
3 with Wi-Fi, multiple service calls, no recourse when the  
4 power goes out. I often need to repeat dial to  
5 correct -- to connect at all." And she went on.

6 How will the Commission ensure that this  
7 rulemaking will not set up unknown numbers of  
8 Californians for nightmares like Genine's?

9 Thank you.

10 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

11 Our next speaker is Holly Gustafson.

12 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER GUSTAFSON

13 Hi. My name is Holly Gustafson. I live in  
14 Cambeker (phonetic), California. I have multiple  
15 landlines and a cell phone, which operates  
16 intermittently. Usually I can't even text my neighbor.  
17 Many people have no service at all with their cell  
18 phones without a landline.

19 My experience was that about three, four months  
20 ago Credo, my long distance carrier, went out of  
21 business or quit or whatever they did, and I just picked  
22 up my phone that morning and I had no service.  
23 Everything basically from my house is long distance.

24 So I immediately called AT&T, because that's  
25 the other bill that I pay for my phone service so I was

1 already with AT&T. I was told when I finally reached  
2 someone after many calls across the waters of the  
3 Pacific to very nice mostly young ladies who were very  
4 polite, but said no in any number of ways that I could  
5 not have long distance hooked up to my house even though  
6 the line was already there, and I was paying AT&T every  
7 month for my basic service. So that went on for a long  
8 time and the various calls and people trying to help  
9 supposedly.

10 I finally got in contact with the CPUC in San  
11 Francisco and was given a case number and a person there  
12 who specialized in my kind of case, and they had a line  
13 all set up with AT&T and the person's name was on their  
14 list.

15 Once I had that case number, I got action and  
16 was sent a contract to sign and so on, and my phone was  
17 magically turned on.

18 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

19 Our next speaker is Bob Matson.

20 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER MATSON

21 Good afternoon. My name is Bob Matson. I'm  
22 the fire chief in Elk, which is a small community about  
23 500 people on the Mendocino coast in Mendocino County.  
24 I want to preface this as saying that I spoke at your  
25 PUC hearing in Ukiah last year, and I guess today I am



1 here to reinforce to you folks how critical the  
2 landlines are to emergency services.

3 Our department has 13 volunteers. We provide  
4 fire protection and ambulance service to our community  
5 and help occasionally surrounding communities also. All  
6 of the 911 calls are routed through a P-SAP center which  
7 is a central dispatch center in the county.

8 A good portion of those calls into that PSAP  
9 center on landlines. And the calls that are coming in  
10 on those landlines are from people that are in very  
11 rural areas of our district that have no access to cell  
12 phone coverage.

13 And I look at you folks, and I recognize -- I'm  
14 sure you remember me from last year. But -- so we need  
15 to -- as far as emergency services and how intertwined  
16 911 is to our dispatch, we want to reinforce our stand  
17 that you do not want to eliminate these lines of last  
18 resort.

19 Thank you.

20 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments,  
21 Chief Matson.

22 We now have our next speaker Clay Eubank.

23 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER EUBANK

24 My name's Clay Eubank. I'm from Anderson  
25 Valley Fire. We're a neighbor to Elk. We're rural in

1 Mendocino County between Ukiah and the coast. I'd say  
2 the vast majority of our -- at least half our residents  
3 have a landline in place, a copper landline. And  
4 there's a large part of our district that we absolutely  
5 cannot get cell coverage, and it can be a problem. And  
6 even when we do have cell coverage, those lines may dial  
7 911 are then routed to CHP versus our PSAP center and  
8 then turns around to our dispatch center.

9           Having said that, we have two copper lines  
10 going into our station. Those two lines we keep for  
11 backup in case of emergency in case things fail. We had  
12 a big fire about three years ago in Redwood Valley and  
13 did not have cell tower coverage in the entire county.  
14 So that impacts us as emergency responders.

15           We've asked to get the fiber optic. However,  
16 AT&T wants to charge us a rather exorbitant amount to  
17 run a line from one pole to one pole over in order to  
18 hook us up, which isn't reasonable.

19           So I just want to state that our area's  
20 extremely rural. I understand technology's moving and  
21 some things you just can't get out of the way of.  
22 However, it shouldn't change until you have the  
23 infrastructure in place to serve everybody, and I don't  
24 believe we're ready for that.

25           ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

1 Our next speaker is Mary Dahl.

2 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER DAHL

3 Hello. I'm Mary Dahl here today to ask you  
4 please don't change the definition of Carrier of Last  
5 Resort. I am totally against getting rid of copper  
6 lines and home phones. They are the only reliable phone  
7 in times of emergency or disaster.

8 For example the Tubbs Fire, Kincade Fire,  
9 (indecipherable) Fires, Humboldt County's huge  
10 earthquake, Southern California fires just to name a  
11 few.

12 With the fires in Sonoma County, people were  
13 greatly relieved knowing I had a working copper land  
14 phone that they we were able to use to contact their  
15 loved ones outside of the danger zone.

16 In 2021 I was diagnosed under ADA guidelines  
17 with electromagnetic hyper sensitivity, which is a  
18 severe allergic reaction to all products that use radio  
19 frequency radiation, "RFR." No network computers.

20 This condition was brought on by a Verizon  
21 small cell tower installed just 42 feet from my home in  
22 2018. Countless others suffer from this condition.

23 Because of my health diagnosis and my severe  
24 reactions to RFR, I can't own, use, or be in the  
25 vicinity of cell phones. I don't own a computer or a

1 router due to the RFR being emitted from  
2 (indecipherable) products. I do plug a corded phone  
3 into a gadget, but it has to have the signals  
4 transmitted from another source of RFR to work.

5 Why changing what we have now that's proven  
6 over and over to work for hundreds of thousands of  
7 people since copper landlines -- excuse me -- landlines  
8 were urged to use especially for all those who will lose  
9 their only communication to the outside world especially  
10 in times of dire need.

11 Yesterday I was on an important phone call  
12 using my copper landline. I didn't know that the power  
13 was off until I heard my refrigerator making a funny  
14 power surge noise. I saw the clock on the oven flashing  
15 after I had hung up. If it wasn't for my copper  
16 landline, I would have lost my call.

17 I rest my case. It's in your hands to make the  
18 decision to not change the definition of Carrier of Last  
19 Resort.

20 Thank you.

21 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

22 Could we have our next speaker, Andrew Mize.

23 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER MIZE

24 Good afternoon. My name's Andrew Mize. I'm  
25 the legislative and policy analyst for Napa County,

1 California. The Commission correctly assesses that COLR  
2 rules were made necessary as a safety net for  
3 California's most vulnerable residents.

4 Over time, however, the telecommunication's  
5 firm charge for providing this service and maintaining  
6 the State's copper landline network subsidized by  
7 ratepayers have a lot of different language  
8 (indecipherable) challenge.

9 But the Commission should not reward the firms  
10 responsible for this state of disrepair with relaxed  
11 regulations that leave those populations vulnerable to  
12 disaster and without reliable methods of communication.

13 The Commission's consideration of any  
14 transition to wireless service should be methodical,  
15 pragmatic, driven by data collected by the Commission  
16 and its agents, not the firms they regulate. And it  
17 should reflect the realities of not moving California's  
18 diverse topography but also the refusal of profit  
19 seeking telecommunications firms to invest in middle  
20 mile and last mile broadband for difficult-to-reach  
21 customers.

22 The Commission should further revise how to  
23 define a COLR's service territory to better capture real  
24 life use cases in modern technologies. Using this  
25 extension, you narrow the parameters and the census

1 block grants.

2 The Commission's -- the Commission's present  
3 use of census block grants to define service territories  
4 do not reflect the reality of modern mile service  
5 coverage and prevent telecommunication providers to  
6 misrepresent the true availability of coverage across  
7 the landscape.

8 The Commission should amend its service  
9 territories to reflect greater precision in the  
10 delineation of topographic features that impact wireless  
11 reception Ideally including a statewide survey to  
12 collect its own data.

13 Finally, service territories to reflect parcel  
14 level realities of wireless coverage to protect  
15 consumers from providers seeking to withdraw from  
16 providing alternative services in lieu of copper lines.

17 As it pertains to evaluations of alternatives,  
18 it's clear in Napa County that current technologies and  
19 better (indecipherable) have not been sufficient to our  
20 residents through regular planned outages, which last  
21 five days in certain areas in one period of red flag  
22 warnings. Disaster events would commonly be out in  
23 (indecipherable) in the county for weeks at a time.

24 Thank you. ]

25 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

1 Our next speaker is Nancy Havell.

2 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER HAVELL

3 Good afternoon. I'm Nancy Havell. I've been a  
4 long participant with my copper landline. I have a  
5 couple of rotary dial phones still in my home just in  
6 case because my cordless phone doesn't work when the  
7 electricity is out, but those rotary dial phones do, and  
8 there have been numerous occasions when I've been the  
9 only one in my vicinity who had access to a landline and  
10 could call in and out.

11 On top of that, I do have a cell phone. I'm  
12 not a total Luddite, but I get, if I'm lucky, one bar at  
13 my home, and I live in the extremely rural outpost of  
14 Santa Rosa. Go figure. So I drop calls all the time on  
15 the cell phone. I refuse to talk on it anymore.

16 I urge you to please, please keep the copper  
17 landline. Thank you.

18 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

19 Our next speaker is Sidnee Cox.

20 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER COX

21 Hi. My name is Sidnee Cox. I live in Windsor,  
22 and I'm speaking for myself today. Thank you for  
23 holding this hearing. Why are we worried? We don't  
24 want to lose the copper landline connection. We need  
25 our phones to work when the power is out. We don't want

1 to just rely on cell phone connections.

2 The power goes out. What happens if the phone  
3 isn't charged?

4 We will be needing battery backup systems.  
5 What happens when we don't have that? What happens when  
6 cell towers aren't working? What about people who don't  
7 use cell phones?

8 Many people who don't have a cell phone -- who  
9 have a cell phone keep it turned off most of the time  
10 because they don't want any RF radiation exposure. I  
11 can't spend more than a few minutes on my cell phone  
12 because it gives me a headache, and I get a burning ear.

13 So what about fiber optics or cable VoIP, Voice  
14 over Internet Protocol, where people can plug in a  
15 corded phone into a modem provided by the company?

16 If they want to avoid RF radiation exposure,  
17 they have to make sure -- the companies have to make  
18 sure that antennas can be turned off on the modems, but  
19 how can this be done?

20 It's not easy. There's no on/off switch for  
21 the Wi-Fi. And if you won't want Wi-Fi, you can't turn  
22 it off. In my experience, even tech support can't help.  
23 I've been told we have to buy our own router from a  
24 third party to guarantee that we can turn off the Wi-Fi.

25 Plus, if there's no power, there's no fiber or



1 VoIP connection because modems and routers need  
2 electricity. These are the problems with the  
3 technology-neutral situation going on.

4 Copper landlines are superior in so many ways.  
5 We need to keep Plain Old Telephone Service, which is  
6 POTS.

7 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you very much for your  
8 comments.

9 Our next speaker is our Sidnee Cox -- oh, our  
10 next speaker is Denise Kampanaro.

11 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER KAMPANARO

12 Hello. My name is Denise Kampanaro, and I have  
13 a 34-year career in California as a home health and  
14 hospice nurse. I spent most of my career in San  
15 Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, but now  
16 I'm employed in Sonoma county.

17 I'm a lover of everything, and I'm not  
18 anti-landline in any way, but I think it is a real issue  
19 of equality for people, like the gentleman from Willits,  
20 not to have Wi-Fi and internet access.

21 For our patients, it's very difficult to  
22 navigate their appointments, the lab results. They have  
23 post-op instructions. Dialing into the physician's  
24 office is sometimes not reasonable or even desired by  
25 the practices.

1           And I do think that health and wellness suffers  
2 if people do not have internet access. Some of our  
3 clinicians do not feel safe going into some of the homes  
4 in La Honda, California, is my best example, and we have  
5 some clinicians that refuse to go there because there is  
6 no internet access and they feel unsafe. So I do think  
7 that is just a matter of equality and health.

8           ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you very much for your  
9 comments.

10           Our next speaker is Tricha Hoffan.

11                         STATEMENT OF SPEAKER HOFFAN

12           Hello. Can you hear me?

13           ALJ GLEGOLA: Yes.

14           SPEAKER HOFFAN: Okay. Hi. I'm Tricha Hoffan.  
15 I live in Sebastopol. I've lived here 30 years, and I  
16 think pretty much everyone who has spoken has covered a  
17 lot of the issues that I wanted to talk about today.

18           And I think there are three: One is the  
19 landline itself, and for emergency preparedness,  
20 reliability, for better sound quality, and heightened  
21 security the landline offers unique advantages that  
22 cannot be replicated by its mobile counterpart.

23           It provides an extra layer for privacy and  
24 security. Cell phones are susceptible to hacking,  
25 malware and data breaches. Also, landlines offer

1 superior call quality because with cell phones you get  
2 dropped calls, voice distortion, poor reception due to  
3 the distance from cell towers.

4 The other one was talking -- people were  
5 talking about the RF, the radiation from cell phones,  
6 and I read a lot about that, and I've been very  
7 concerned about that issue as well.

8 I keep my cell phone in bag, a carrying case.  
9 When I do need it for emergencies or, perhaps, also  
10 getting directions when I'm driving somewhere. I don't  
11 really use it at all. I have a landline. I have three  
12 landlines, corded landlines, in my house, and that's  
13 what I use. I don't even have smart meters in my home.  
14 I have opted out of that because of radiation issues.

15 And I think that it's important that we realize  
16 that there is an issue as far as the radiation. People  
17 are sensitive to it. I believe that I am as well, even  
18 though I have not had any medical diagnosis of it, but I  
19 have opted out, like I said, for smart meters. And I  
20 hardly ever use my cell phone. I use my landline.

21 I live alone. And I have conversations with  
22 people on my landline, which I don't feel comfortable  
23 with a cell phone because of the quality of the  
24 communication is not good.

25 Also, something else that people haven't

1 addressed is the cost. I'm paying an extra \$360 a year  
2 just to keep -- towards AT&T to keep my landlines. I've  
3 also -- with my cell phone, I've had to upgrade because  
4 Consumer Cellular, they couldn't provide it to my old  
5 cell phone. So I had to go out and spend hundreds of  
6 thousands to get an updated one.

7 And so there are issues there as far as cost,  
8 and there's the safety, the cost of it as well as the  
9 radiation from the cell phones.

10 So thank you. I think we need to keep the  
11 landlines. Oh, I got two seconds. Thank you very much.

12 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

13 Our next speaker is John Walsh.

14 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER WALSH

15 My name is John Walsh and I am the  
16 Communications Manager for the Information Systems  
17 Department at the County of Sonoma.

18 Sonoma county contains many rural and isolated  
19 communities where changes in regulations threaten to  
20 undermine core government services. It is vital that  
21 everyone in our county can receive basic phone service  
22 regardless of the location of their residence for the  
23 health, safety and welfare of our residents.

24 It is not a theoretical challenge in Sonoma  
25 County. In 2017, our residents have experienced several

1 devastating wildfires that have cost many lives,  
2 destroyed thousands of homes and businesses, and  
3 upturned lives, including evacuations of tens of  
4 thousands of our residents with little notice.

5 Today residents rely on traditional phone  
6 service as an integral part of their emergency  
7 preparedness. They don't maintain traditional wireline  
8 service because they want another monthly expense; they  
9 pay for this service because they depend on it.

10 Continuing with the designation of a Carrier of  
11 Last Resort ensures stable communications so local  
12 governments can perform their core responsibilities.  
13 Current advances in telecommunication technology are  
14 simply not reliable enough for emergencies or public  
15 safety services.

16 Our community cannot accept adoption of a  
17 technology that might only work 90 percent of the time  
18 in life-threatening situations.

19 Allowing designated providers to withdraw from  
20 or diminish their obligations without a guaranteed  
21 alternative creates an unacceptable level of risk.

22 We support the work of the CPUC in continuing  
23 to provide oversight in a way that ensures stable and  
24 reliable communications in a technology-agnostic manner.

25 On behalf of Chair Lynda Hopkins, the Sonoma

1 County Board of Supervisors, and the residents of our  
2 county, we thank you for your time and consideration of  
3 our community's needs in your proceeding.

4 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

5 Our next speaker is Paul-Andre Schabraq.

6 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER SCHABRAQ

7 My name is Paul Schabraq. Changes to the  
8 definition of COLR is based on the faulty assumption  
9 that there's an ultimate technology such as fiber-optic  
10 or cell phones as opposed to copper landlines and that's  
11 simply not true.

12 We've heard enough evidence here to show that  
13 it doesn't work if there's an emergency or if it's a  
14 power failure. We've experienced no cell phone service  
15 at all, but one point I think needs to be emphasized is  
16 that the cost of owning a cell phone is prohibitive for  
17 many people.

18 And in order to get a cell phone, you have to  
19 have a certain amount of income both to buy and to  
20 maintain it, which is greater than the cost of  
21 maintaining your landline.

22 And the other thing is, we've been paying our  
23 phone bill for years, and part of that phone bill pays  
24 for the maintenance of copper landlines. Why should we  
25 abandon the system for which we have paid dearly for

1 over the years and works for a technology which not  
2 equivalent to what already exists. Thank you.

3 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

4 Our next speaker is Jorge Rebagliati.

5 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER REBAGLIATI

6 Thank you. My name is Jorge Rebagliati, and  
7 I'm from Santa Rosa. I just want to emphasize that I  
8 oppose the removal of landlines very strongly. We have  
9 already discussed that they are necessary for reliable  
10 communication, and they also have -- some of the  
11 concerns of speakers is that removing landlines will  
12 increase the amount of radiation influences in the  
13 atmosphere, which have been proven to have detrimental  
14 effects on animal and plant life.

15 So, definitely, we want to keep our landlines,  
16 and we have to keep in mind those technology issues. We  
17 should not serve technology.

18 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

19 Our next speaker is Rhonda Provost.

20 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER PROVOST

21 My name is Rhonda Provost, and I want to thank  
22 you for hosting this opportunity to share our  
23 experiences and thoughts about this topic. I live in  
24 Forestville. And in west county our connectivity is not  
25 always the best. As a consequence, my husband and I,

1 who have resided there for over 35 years, have retained  
2 our landlines, which we love, and we don't ever plan to  
3 give up.

4 And I'm kind of inspired by the speaker earlier  
5 who talked about rotary phones because we have touch  
6 phones. We have a rotary phone, and we have a princess  
7 phone, and we love them.

8 So our cell phones are older, like the 6X  
9 version of the Apple phone. And for several reasons, I  
10 recently, to the tune of \$1100, I acquired a new cell  
11 phone. And it's not just spotty. Literally, every time  
12 I get phoned from anybody, they can't understand. I  
13 have to rely on a landline to contact them again.

14 We have been evacuated three times for  
15 wildfires and because we had plans for where we were  
16 going to go, the possible eventuality that we were  
17 evacuated, we never needed to use our cell phones --  
18 thank god -- during the evacuation process, but I'd hate  
19 to think that we would need to use it in the event of  
20 another evacuation.

21 In 2013 -- I'm a runner. And my husband,  
22 brother-in-law and I were at the Boston Marathon when  
23 the bombings took place. I was two blocks from the  
24 finish line. My husband and brother-in-law were on the  
25 other side of the finish line when the bombs went off.



1           We had no way to contact each other. The  
2 satellites, the cellular service went down. Millions of  
3 people were trying to connect with each other.

4           By the grace of god, we reconnected. It was  
5 only because of landlines that we could communicate with  
6 our families who were frantic for our safety as we were  
7 frantic for one another's.

8           So that's what happened in this disaster. I  
9 know that that was Massachusetts, but disasters happen  
10 everywhere. And I would not ever want to be in that  
11 situation again when you can't communicate with loved  
12 ones.

13           And, finally --

14           (timer notification.)

15           SPEAKER PROVOST: -- recently within the last  
16 year, I have had three episodes of vertigo, severe  
17 enough on two occasions to require ambulance transport  
18 to the hospital because I just -- I didn't have a brain  
19 tumor. They did all the tests.

20           And I was told after the second admission, the  
21 next time just stay at home because they were able to  
22 treat me and discharge me.

23           The next time it happened, I was on my back --

24           (timer notification.)

25           SPEAKER PROVOST: -- for four days. It's hard

1 to know if it's --

2 (Timer notification.)

3 SPEAKER PROVOST: -- laptops or --

4 (Timer notification.)

5 SPEAKER PROVOST: Thank you for your time for  
6 listening. ]

7 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

8 Our next speaker is Alex Crohm.

9 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER CROHM

10 Thank you. My name's Alex Crohm. I'm a  
11 resident of Santa Rosa. I was born and raised here. I  
12 live here with my two young kids who I do my best to  
13 protect every day.

14 The CPUC is responsible for providing  
15 affordable and safe and reliable telecommunications.  
16 What that means is not wireless. Wireless is unsafe,  
17 and that's a fact. It's not just for those who are  
18 highly sensitive. We are all sensitive to it. It's  
19 just a spectrum of how sensitive we are especially our  
20 children. So any rule that promotes more wireless and  
21 more cell towers like one the CPUC allowed them to put  
22 right next to Mary Dahl's house on a PG&E pole needs to  
23 stop.

24 You need to go back to the drawing board and  
25 promote safe telecommunications with wires. I don't

1 care if it's copper, cable, fiber optics. It needs to  
2 be reliable, but it needs to be safe.

3 I drove here a couple miles. I passed I think  
4 seven cell towers on PG&E poles next to people's homes  
5 putting out electromagnetic radiation 24/7 a carcinogen,  
6 a neurotoxin, and this is a town that fought to create  
7 ordinance to limit them. It's much worse in other cities  
8 around California. I feel sorry for people living in  
9 San Francisco.

10 So may God have mercy on the souls of anyone  
11 creating rules to promote more wireless technology.  
12 This madness needs to stop, and it needs to stop now.  
13 And those of you who are in the power to do so have a  
14 responsibility to do it.

15 AT&T used to be a public utilities company, and  
16 they illegally subsidized money to their wireless  
17 private company. Maybe you go after that money and have  
18 them upgrade or maintain the copper lines that  
19 apparently are hard to do. It's too expensive I guess.

20 Obviously the wireless private companies are in  
21 it for the money, and that's shameful.

22 Thank you for your time.

23 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

24 Our next speaker is Orlaan Koehle. If I  
25 mispronounced that, I apologize.

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STATEMENT OF SPEAKER KOEHLE

It's a difficult name. I understand. It's actually Orlaan Koehle. My husband is from Germany, and only a German knows how to pronounce that.

But I am here because of my concern for taking away our landline. I would like to first of all thank the CPUC for coming to Santa Rosa. I was part of a group that fought the smart meters from being mandatory, and we used to go to you every month. That lasted for about two years until we were able to get an attorney to represent us and a possible lawsuit, and then you finally listened and decided that we could have a opt out. So I was very fortunate to be able to opt out from a smart meter. And hopefully there are others who saw the light who did the same thing.

I think it was opting out of that smart meter that actually saved my husband and my home in the rural area of Santa Rosa. Six homes around us were totally burned during the 2017 fire and ours was miraculously protected and survived.

So if you would like to know more about the connection between smart meters and fires, I have it all written in this book that I'm going to give to you. It's also an updated version of my book that I wrote about smart meters that I also gave to the CPUC called

1 Just Say No to Big Brother's Smart Meter. It also has  
2 that in here and also has my objection to cell phones.

3 I am not EMF sensitive. I am big brother  
4 sensitive, and I truly believe cell phones are way too  
5 much of a privacy violation as well as smart meters.  
6 And I truly believe that we're supposed to be a free  
7 society, and taking away our landlines would just create  
8 more of that privacy violation. I love our landline;  
9 and where we live, that is sometimes the only possible  
10 way we have to communicate because cell phones do not  
11 always work.

12 I also in this book mention how very dangerous  
13 cell phones for children and -- children's -- because of  
14 their bone structure, a cell phone held up to their head  
15 gets far more radiation than it does to an adult.

16 And the FCC knows all about this, but they are  
17 going by silly old 1996 guidelines that are so outdated  
18 that the FCC is a captured organization. It's totally  
19 funded -- well, not totally -- but gets much money from  
20 the telecommunication industry. So they're really  
21 answering to them rather than to the people.

22 So I truly hope that you will stand by the vast  
23 majority of people who have spoken here. We want our  
24 landlines. We want to be able to still use them. We do  
25 not want them to be taken away from us.

1 Thank you very much.

2 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments. And  
3 if you want to leave anything for us, please leave it at  
4 that table with our court reporters, and we will take  
5 it.

6 Our next speaker is Steven Powell.

7 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER POWELL

8 Hello. Thank you for convening this meeting.  
9 I bought a place up in Annapolis in the northwest corner  
10 of the county in the early 1970s. I started out running  
11 down to the post office when I needed to make a phone  
12 call, and then we developed an elaborate radio system to  
13 be able to call out. We finally got AT&T in the early  
14 1980s.

15 Living in a remote area like that, having  
16 telephone access to the rest of the world is essential  
17 at times when we are stuck there when a tree falls  
18 during big storms.

19 AT&T became increasingly expensive. Every call  
20 we made ended up being a long distance call, so we tried  
21 to use a cell phone. I had Verizon. Verizon was  
22 extremely patchy there. There were times when it was  
23 not functioning at all. Verizon told us that they had  
24 no intention of improving the service, and they would  
25 let me out of the contract.

1           So that meant the only we could use Verizon is  
2 with a computer connection with Wi-Fi. When the power  
3 went out, which it did frequently in the winter, we  
4 depended on the telephone.

5           AT&T has become extremely difficult to work  
6 with. It's hard to talk to them, to talk to anyone. We  
7 spend hours on the phone with any issue I had. The  
8 phone went down a couple years ago. It took them two  
9 weeks to come out. They left me without a phone for two  
10 weeks. Hours on the phone did nothing. When I asked  
11 the repairman, you know, if he had been extremely busy,  
12 he said, "No. They just called me. It was a simple  
13 switch."

14           My partner's in Mendocino County, Point Arena,  
15 she's fought for years with AT&T with fraudulent  
16 billing. Hundreds of dollars with bills piling up when  
17 there were no phone calls made at all. Hours on the  
18 phone. The people in Asia who could provide no help.

19           At this point, we have two cell phones neither  
20 of which work in Annapolis. I don't know that I'll be  
21 able to get AT&T service there any longer. We  
22 essentially are told there's no telephone service where  
23 we live a good portion of the year.

24           A lot of people say they want to make America  
25 great again. One of the things that makes America great

1 is the decision that all American citizens deserve  
2 certain utilities. Having good phone service for  
3 everyone makes the country strong and ensures the safety  
4 of our population. So please keep our landlines.

5 Thank you.

6 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

7 Our next speaker is Kelly Dannier.

8 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER DANNIER

9 Thank you. Hi there. My name's Kelly Dannier,  
10 and my family and I are building a house at the Point  
11 Reyes Station. That will be our sole residence. Point  
12 Reyes Station in Westborn County (sic) is a rural area  
13 with poor cell service and overground power lines that  
14 are the source of frequent power outages during storms.

15 My property, like many others, is out of range  
16 for cell service. If the power were to go out, Wi-Fi  
17 calling would not work and we would have no way of  
18 contacting emergency services.

19 For this reason, I requested that AT&T provide  
20 a copper landline on the property. Something I  
21 understand they are legally obligated to do as the  
22 Carrier of Last Resort.

23 I made numerous calls to AT&T to get this  
24 landline installed and have been told at every turn that  
25 our property is ineligible for a new landline. I've



1 spent hours speaking with overseas representatives and  
2 their managers, representative from AT&T stores, and  
3 have spoken with and exchanged emails with Sandra Car  
4 (phonetic) the office of the president.

5 Like the others, Ms. Car told me that AT&T is  
6 under no obligation to provide a new copper landline and  
7 offered me voice over IP, which, again, would require  
8 power to function. It does not solve my problem. I  
9 seem to have no other way of getting AT&T to give me a  
10 landline than by hopefully attending this hearing and  
11 pleading my case. I really don't know what else to do.

12 Our neighbor just behind our house has an AT&T  
13 landline, and I suspect many of our other neighbors do  
14 as well.

15 It should not be difficult to run a new line to  
16 my house so I can be assured that we would be able to  
17 reach emergency services in all circumstances. How can  
18 I get this done?

19 I have twin five-year-olds, and I'm terrified  
20 at the thought of an emergency happening and not being  
21 able to call for help due to a power outage or a Wi-Fi  
22 glitch. What we would do, run to the fire department?  
23 Run to our neighbors, many of whom are second  
24 homeowners, and hope that someone is home?

25 As a rural area with no sell service, landlines

1 must continue to exist until there is full, consistent  
2 cell service. This request seems easy for AT&T to  
3 accommodate, and, again, I believe it is their legal and  
4 moral obligation to do so.

5 I appreciate your consideration in this  
6 critical health and safety matter.

7 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comment.  
8 Ms. Dannier, I just want to make a suggestion that you  
9 reach out to our -- just have a conversation with our  
10 Public Advisors Office. They can send you to the right  
11 people at our customer affairs branch, and they should  
12 be able to help you out.

13 Our next speaker is Dixie Gong.

14 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER GONG

15 Good afternoon. My name is Dixie Gong. I have  
16 been a resident of Santa Rosa for many, many years.  
17 Since the Tubbs Fire in 2017, we've been called to  
18 evacuate three separate times for wildfires. The last  
19 tsunami alert, which was December 5th, 2024, on Thursday  
20 at 10:45 a.m., I was the only one between my son and I  
21 to receive a cell phone alert. My son and I both live  
22 within the Santa Rosa city limits. I tried to reach my  
23 son's cell phone and landline phone, but somehow I just  
24 couldn't reach him.

25 Even now in non-emergency times, it's still

1 difficult communicating clearly at times using a cell  
2 phone. My son has spotty cell phone signals at his  
3 house and mine. Most internet phones won't work at all  
4 during emergencies. So the landline is accurately  
5 depended to be the only phone that works during  
6 emergencies, fires, earthquakes, and other disasters as  
7 well as for health, medical and physical problems. The  
8 loss of landline would be devastating to seniors as well  
9 as myself on a fixed income.

10 There's also low-income customers who can't  
11 afford cell phones if you're on Lifeline to --  
12 (indecipherable). It's also the only line they can use  
13 to call to emergency organizations when they are located  
14 out in some remote area. I think it's a great mistake  
15 to limit landline phones.

16 Thank you for allowing me to express my  
17 viewpoint.

18 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you very much for sharing  
19 your opinion.

20 Before we go to our next speaker, I do want to  
21 mention that our -- the phone number for the customer  
22 affairs branch is 1-800-649-7570.

23 Our next speaker is Phil Schutt.

24 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER SCHUTT

25 Thank you, everyone. Thank you for the

1 opportunity to speak today. My name is Phil Schutt.  
2 I'm speaking -- I'm a 25-year resident of Sonoma County,  
3 primarily West County and speaking today on behalf of  
4 Digital Lift, my employer. Formerly known as the  
5 Community Tech Network.

6 We were founded in 2001. Our mission has  
7 always been clear to transform lives through digital  
8 equity partnering with federal, state, and local  
9 agencies. We provide devices, internet access, and  
10 digital literacy training for a diverse range of our  
11 local individuals regardless of their age, background,  
12 income level, or primary language.

13 I was the program manager for the CPUC Digital  
14 Literacy Program as well as Sonoma's Access to  
15 Technology Program that recently ended.

16 We're instrumental in providing internet  
17 access, digital literacy training to those who need it  
18 most throughout our county. Our efforts have been  
19 focused on bridging the digital divide that continues to  
20 affect all Californians. To close this gap, we must  
21 provide digital -- we must bridge the divide and  
22 modernize California's communications network.

23 I've seen firsthand how many of our community  
24 members still struggle to either no or limited internet  
25 access. Access to affordable reliable high-speed

1 internet and modern telecommunications is not a luxury.  
2 It's a necessity.

3 Critical community services and resources rely  
4 on our community members' access to high-speed internet  
5 access. Unfortunately many Californians are still  
6 relying on outdated copper networks. Reliable broadband  
7 is essential for our community resources, online  
8 learning, telehealth, remote work, and many economic  
9 opportunities.

10 Expanding that access to affordable high-speed  
11 connectivity is essential in order to build a more  
12 inclusive future for our state. Modernizing  
13 California's telecommunication infrastructure is vital  
14 step towards ensuring that every resident has access to  
15 the technology they need to thrive in today's world  
16 enabling our state to build a stronger more connected  
17 inclusive future.

18 That's why I strongly urge you to prioritize  
19 the modernization of California's communication networks  
20 today.

21 Thank you for the opportunity.

22 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

23 Our next speaker is Sharron Kelly. ]

24 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER KELLY

25 I'm going to be brief because I didn't get very

1 much sleep last night. I live in affordable housing in  
2 San Rafael, and there's about 90 units, and I do not  
3 have a landline. I would like to get one, but I do see  
4 the consequences on my neighbors.

5 I see that modems don't get turned off at  
6 night. I turn mine off, and I believe it does have an  
7 affect on people's brains and on their memories. And I  
8 just have to get away. I just have to get out of there,  
9 go to the beach on a weekly basis. That's how I take  
10 care of myself.

11 And I just feel for the younger generation  
12 that's immersed in this technology. So I really hope  
13 that we can keep connected to the earth with the  
14 landlines. Thank you.

15 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank for your time today.

16 Our next speaker is Martha Glaser.

17 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER GLASER

18 Good afternoon. My name is Martha Glaser, and  
19 I have heard very -- many good things in the short time  
20 I've been here. I really just came to say one small  
21 thing. I have a neighbor that I was speaking to who is  
22 active military, a resident of Sebastopol, friends that  
23 live in the county and in west county.

24 And he was making a point that -- you know,  
25 he's an active reservist, and in anything with

1 technology in the military, you want redundancy. You  
2 want as much good source of communication as is  
3 possible.

4 And so he was asking -- because he couldn't get  
5 here today -- why would you get rid of one of the means  
6 that's a reliable source of communication?

7 I do have a landline, and he wants to have a  
8 landline. He has three small children. And he seems  
9 unable to get one through AT&T or SONET.

10 And hearing other people -- somebody from Point  
11 Reyes -- the inequity of that situation seems troubling  
12 and problematic. Everyone should have the right to have  
13 secure communication services.

14 When I hear the talk of modernization, I  
15 shudder because I fear that that's just words, just  
16 euphemisms. You're saying let's get rid of our older,  
17 more reliable copper landline technology, and let's just  
18 throw up more cell towers.

19 So until there's an understanding that wireless  
20 communication that relies on cell towers is not going to  
21 be healthy or safe or sustainable or useful when the  
22 power goes out in emergency -- until there's an  
23 understanding, that wire technology is really -- is --  
24 is -- is going to help us all and continue to be safe  
25 for us all, then I think that we not only need to be

1 able to keep our copper landlines, those that have it,  
2 we need to allow other people who either live out -- our  
3 beautiful topography -- topography by the coast and by  
4 mountains is why many people desire to live here, and  
5 that topography also needs to be protected as do we.

6 And the answer isn't to put a tower -- a cell  
7 tower on every single mountain and shoreline. The  
8 answer is to allow for people to have safe, wired  
9 connectivity. That's all. Thank you.

10 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.  
11 Our next speaker is Catherine Siragusa.

12 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER SIRAGUSA

13 Hello. Thank you for this opportunity. My  
14 name Catherine Siragusa. I'm here today for Shari  
15 Newman. Shari can't be here because she has  
16 Electromagnetic Radiation Syndrome also known as  
17 electromagnetic hypersensitivity.

18 She is no longer able to tolerate Wi-Fi, being  
19 directly near a computer, using a cell phone or even a  
20 cell phone on her or around her without getting  
21 debilitating symptoms. I type and send work and  
22 personal emails and texts that she dictates by phone on  
23 her copper landline.

24 The condition she has can be extremely  
25 isolating because she can't be anywhere within Wi-Fi,



1 cell towers or smart meters. She relies on her copper  
2 landline to call people for both work and to help with  
3 social isolation.

4 Shari co-founded a school in 2006 with students  
5 with learning differences and other challenges. Now  
6 that she needs to work from home, she consults daily by  
7 phone with staff from campus, who rely on being able to  
8 reach her in urgent and everyday situations.

9 She relies on her copper landline in order to  
10 work with me and with her staff at her school. She also  
11 knows other people with this condition who rely on their  
12 copper landlines as the only telephone they can tolerate  
13 using it both for the daily function and for  
14 emergencies. Please ensure that all customers are  
15 accommodated with a copper landline telephone that they  
16 can use.

17 And on a personal note, consider the climate  
18 effects in California with fires, floods and  
19 earthquakes. I think taking out the secure option of  
20 copper landlines is in complete disrespect of the people  
21 of California.

22 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

23 Our next speaker is Walt Olawski.

24 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER OLAWSKI

25 My name is Walt Olawski and I live here in

1 Santa Rosa. I think it is very important that when the  
2 CPUC comes up with the final, revised rules for the  
3 Carrier of Last Resort, that those rules mandate that  
4 the Carrier of Last Resort shall preserve and maintain  
5 the existing statewide legacy network system. Said  
6 system being defined as the digital copper-wire landline  
7 system. Thank you.

8 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

9 Sorry for the delay there. I was just waiting  
10 for my network to update.

11 Those are all the speakers that have signed up.  
12 Does anyone else want to speak?

13 If you do, just approach the podium, state your  
14 name, spell it, and fire away.

15 (No response.)

16 ALJ GLEGOLA: I don't see anyone else that  
17 wants to speak.

18 Commissioner Reynolds, do you have any  
19 comments?

20 COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: I just want to offer my  
21 thanks and appreciation to everyone who took time out of  
22 their day to share their perspective and thoughts with  
23 us. Thank you very much. It will help us in our  
24 decision-making process.

25 ALJ GLEGOLA: Commissioner Houck?

1                   COMMISSIONER HOUCK: Yes. I just want to join  
2 with Commissioner Reynolds in thanking everyone for  
3 being here today. It's very important we hear from the  
4 public on these issues.

5                   ALJ GLEGOLA: Yes. Thank you for attending  
6 today. Thank you to our court reporters, to our Public  
7 Adviser's Office, the City of Santa Rosa. We very much  
8 appreciate your help today.

9                   That concludes the 2:00 p.m. Public  
10 Participation Hearing for Rulemaking 24-06-012. We are  
11 adjourned and off the record.

12                   (At the hour of 3:33 p.m., this matter having  
13 been continued to 6:00 p.m., April 30, 2025,  
14 the Commission then adjourned.)

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EVENING SESSION - 6:02 P.M.

ALJ GLEGOLA: We are on the record. The Commission will come to order. Today is April 30th, 2025. This is the time and place for the second of two public participation hearings today for Rulemaking 24-106-012.

In this proceeding, the Commission is considering whether there's a need to update its Carrier of Last Resort rules, which were adopted in 1996 and updated slightly in 2012 and also what those revisions should be if any.

As a reminder, this is not about AT&T's application to withdraw as a Carrier of Last Resort. The Commission has dismissed that application last year.

Today's public participation hearings, or PPHs, as we sometimes call them, are being held in the Santa Rosa City Council Chambers. I very much want to thank the City of Santa Rosa for allowing us to use this room today.

I want to make sure that everyone in attendance understands that the purpose of today's meeting is to hear from the public. No action will be taken today.

My name is Thomas J. Glegola. I am the assigned administrative law judge for this proceeding. The honorable John Reynolds to my left is the assigned

1 commissioner. We are also joined by the honorable  
2 Darcie Houck, another commissioner at the Public  
3 Utilities Commission.

4 Commissioner Reynolds, would you like to make  
5 some opening remarks?

6 COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: Yes. Thank you, Judge  
7 Glegola. And good evening, everyone. Thank you for  
8 joining us.

9 I'm John Reynolds. I'm the assigned  
10 commissioner for the Carrier of Last Resort Rulemaking,  
11 which is why we're gathered here today to hear from you.  
12 Thank you, again, for joining us at this public hearing.

13 I also want to thank our PUC staff: The Public  
14 Advisors Office, our court reporters, and everyone from  
15 the PUC who's helping us ensure today's event goes  
16 smoothly. I also want to thank the City of Santa Rosa  
17 for hosting us as well.

18 I understand Judge Glegola will go over some of  
19 the matters of today's event in some more detail later,  
20 but I'd like to start with providing some information on  
21 the California Public Utilities Commission, or the  
22 "Commission," or the "CPUC," or the "PUC," and Carrier  
23 of Last Resort rules.

24 The CPUC is a public government agency that  
25 regulates public utilities in California spanning across

1 the energy, water, and telecommunication industries.

2 The Commission is headed by five commissioners  
3 with each commissioner serving a six-year staggered  
4 term. As a commissioner, I'm assigned to a wide variety  
5 of cases including this rulemaking proceeding.

6 As for these Carrier of Last Resort rules, they  
7 originated starting in the 1990s. In 1994, the state  
8 legislature tasked the PUC with ensuring universal  
9 telecommunication service provided at affordable prices  
10 to all Californians.

11 In response the Commission decided to designate  
12 existing incumbent telephone providers like AT&T in each  
13 service territory to be what we call Carriers of Last  
14 Resort, or "COLRs."

15 So what is a Carrier of Last Resort? It's a  
16 telecom service provider that stands ready to provide  
17 basic service to any customer requesting that service  
18 within a specified area consistent with that universal  
19 service policy.

20 These are our COLR rules, and there are  
21 requirements for these kinds of telephone providers.  
22 Among a number of others, the Carrier of Last Resort  
23 rules require that at least one telephone or telecom  
24 company in a specified area is legally required to  
25 provide access to basic service to anyone in its service

1 territory who requests it.

2 Basic service contains nine elements including  
3 the ability to call 911, to receive voice-grade quality  
4 service over long distances, and to receive low-income  
5 discounts on service like Lifeline. This means that a  
6 Carrier of Last Resort cannot withdraw from its  
7 obligations unless another carrier takes on the  
8 requirements of the Carrier of Last Resort.

9 Currently every California household is served  
10 by a Carrier of Last Resort. There's 16 designated  
11 companies across California with the service territories  
12 AT&T being the largest COLR and Frontier being the  
13 second largest.

14 Today most COLRs provide basic service on  
15 landline telephone networks. However, when we talk  
16 about basic service, I do want to emphasize that this  
17 does not necessarily mean that the particular phone  
18 service you use or the service you receive is basic  
19 service or that it's served by a landline copper or  
20 fiber optic wirelines.

21 Your phone service may for example be provided  
22 by a Voice over Internet Protocol, or "VoIP,"  
23 connection. This rulemaking is evaluating possible  
24 changes and updates to our rules so that they're as  
25 effective and relevant today as possible given the

1 technological changes and changes in law over the past  
2 30-plus years in providing communication service while  
3 also ensuring no one's disadvantaged due to a change in  
4 the COLR rules and that all Californians have access to  
5 affordable, safe, and reliable telephone service.

6 Changes to the rules could potentially affect  
7 the conditions of Carrier of Last Resort withdrawal and  
8 who provides basic service for a customer does indeed  
9 use basic service.

10 A company that is no longer designated as a  
11 Carrier of Last Resort could also stop providing basic  
12 service. Any changes to the COLR rules, however, will  
13 not diminish the Commission's commitment to ensuring  
14 that all Californians no matter their income or location  
15 have access to essential communication services that are  
16 affordable, safe, and reliable as codified in the  
17 statute.

18 I acknowledge that most Californians today do  
19 not rely on basic voice services typically provided on  
20 plain old telephone service or landline telephone  
21 service and are instead moving to more data intensive  
22 internet-based services on cell phones and broadband.  
23 These require and have required support from public and  
24 private investment and modern higher bandwidth  
25 communications infrastructure.



1           That said, we do currently have a  
2   100-plus-year-old legacy telephone network  
3   infrastructure that's already everywhere in the state  
4   that has been used and continues to be used to provide  
5   universal phone service.

6           While we have added lots of investment in newer  
7   networks, the physical infrastructure of old legacy  
8   telephone network, its poles, conduit, and rights of way  
9   have contributed to delivering and still continues to  
10  deliver universal communication service to Californians.

11           sometimes this service on the legacy network is  
12  the most reliable form of communication service for  
13  residents in certain areas where cell phone service and  
14  broadband are not readily available or accessible.

15           I will note that our rules are designed to be  
16  technology neutral. It has not been our expectation  
17  that COLRs serve customers through copper networks  
18  though we have seen carriers choose that technology to  
19  deliver service.

20           In this rulemaking, our fundamental goal is  
21  that all Californians have access to reliable and  
22  quality telecommunication services for safety, critical  
23  communication, and modern connectivity needs no matter  
24  their income or where they live including high fire  
25  threat, disaster prone, rural, remote, and underserved

1 areas.

2           What's the purpose of the public participation  
3 hearing here today? The purpose is for us to hear  
4 directly from customers and concerned Californians about  
5 the issues in the scope of this proceeding including the  
6 issues I just discussed. Today's public comments in  
7 addition to comments made at all the public  
8 participation hearings we have been holding over the  
9 last few weeks will help the Commission evaluate whether  
10 and what changes we should make in the rules so that  
11 those rules make sense in today's telecommunication  
12 landscape.

13           It is crucial to our decisionmaking process  
14 that we hear from customers on these issues, and I want  
15 to thank you for joining us to provide your input and  
16 concerns this evening.

17           We are also holding workshops where we've been  
18 hearing discussion by the parties focused on specific  
19 topics in this proceeding including the parties'  
20 specific proposals for changes to the COLR rules. We've  
21 also heard from tribal, public safety, rural county, and  
22 from representatives from other states sharing their  
23 perspectives and lessons that they've learned.

24           These workshops have been recorded and will be  
25 available for public viewing on the PUC's home website

1 or YouTube page. Parties will also provide comments and  
2 reply comments on those workshops.

3 So where are we in this rulemaking? Once we  
4 conclude these hearings, the Communication Division  
5 staff at the PUC will create a staff proposal on how, if  
6 at all, we should change the Carrier of Last Resort  
7 rules and any other recommendations or key findings for  
8 the Commission's consideration of these rules. That  
9 should come later this year after the summer.

10 Parties to the proceeding will then file  
11 comments and reply comments on the staff proposal. We  
12 may also hold evidentiary hearings if parties request  
13 them at our San Francisco hearing rooms.

14 After comments on the staff proposal and any  
15 hearings if they occur, the parties will then file their  
16 opening and reply briefs on this rulemaking. After all  
17 that process, Judge Glegola will issue a proposed  
18 decision for the Commission to consider at one of our  
19 official voting meetings.

20 All of these milestones along with the scope of  
21 issues in this rulemaking are available on the  
22 proceeding's docket card on the PUC's website for this  
23 proceeding number R.24-06-012, and there is a  
24 February 4th, 2025, scoping ruling that outlines the  
25 issues and schedule for this proceeding.

1           If anyone is interested in getting  
2 notifications about continuing events in this proceeding  
3 or even to become a party, please contact the Public  
4 Advisors Office. A representative is available at the  
5 table at the door where you signed up to speak today.

6           Some subsequent dates for milestones in this  
7 case have yet to be determined. No decision has yet  
8 been made about what changes, if any, to make in our  
9 rules, and no changes can occur without a vote on a  
10 proposed decision supported by a majority of the five  
11 commissioners.

12           All that said, I will now turn it back to Judge  
13 Glegola, and I look forward to hearing from everyone.

14           ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you, Commissioner Reynolds.  
15 Commissioner Houck, do you have any comments?

16           COMMISSIONER HOUCK: Thank you, Judge Glegola.

17           I also want to thank everyone for being here  
18 this evening. I want to thank Commissioner Reynolds for  
19 his leadership in this proceeding, Judge Glegola for all  
20 of your work on the proceeding facilitating the  
21 extensive hearings that are being held in the  
22 proceeding, our court reporters, and staff for being  
23 here this evening, the Public Advisors Office.

24           And, again, as was stated earlier if you want  
25 to provide comment tonight, please go back and to the

1 Public Advisors Office to get on the list.

2 I want to thank the City of Roseville (sic) for  
3 hosting us this evening. And then just want to  
4 reiterate that this proceeding is about looking at our  
5 Carrier of Last Resort rules. Those rules have not been  
6 changed in over 30 years. So we're taking a look at  
7 what needs to remain the same and what needs to be able  
8 to change.

9 The proceeding is not about either eliminating  
10 or affirming any specific company's obligation as a  
11 Carrier of Last Resort, and it's important that we hear  
12 from the public on what your needs are. That's why  
13 we're here this evening.

14 And so I look forward to hearing from everyone  
15 and will turn it back over to Judge Glegola.

16 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you, Commissioner Houck.

17 If anyone would like any more detail regarding  
18 this proceeding, there's a fact sheet at the table just  
19 out in front. You can also go to our website  
20 [www.cpuc.ca.gov/PPH](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PPH). There's also more information on  
21 the main webpage [www.cpuc.ca.gov](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov). Scroll down to the  
22 bottom third of the page, and you can see a link to  
23 click on.

24 We are early in the process of this proceeding.  
25 We're essentially in fact finding mode. In total we've

1 had five in-person meetings like this one. Earlier this  
2 month we were in San Diego County, Los Angeles County,  
3 Bakersfield, and last week we were in Roseville. Each  
4 location we have a 2:00 p.m. public participation  
5 hearing and a 6:00 p.m. one.

6 We also have four remote hearings scheduled.  
7 One was the afternoon of April 17th. Another one is  
8 scheduled for next week Monday beginning at 6:00 p.m.  
9 And then we have the final two on May 13th. One  
10 starting at 2:00 p.m., and one starting at 6:00 p.m.

11 And if you or your friends, neighbors, are  
12 looking for -- family members are looking for any other  
13 ways to participate in this proceeding because they were  
14 not able to attend today or any of the remote ones,  
15 please first I would say if you don't already have the  
16 fact sheet, the information is probably already on  
17 there. But if not, please speak with our Public  
18 Advisors staff who is at the table right now, and they  
19 can walk you through any way that you wish to  
20 participate, or you can call in at a later date.

21 So before hearing from you, I want to go over a  
22 couple ground rules. I know that at this point we only  
23 have five people signed up to speak. But I also know  
24 that some people may want to leave. They have a parking  
25 situation. They have short parking -- or what have you.

1           So I'm going to ask if you can keep your  
2 remarks to three minutes. If you want to leave at that  
3 point or stay, that's totally up to you. We will  
4 probably go off the record after everyone's done and  
5 stick around for another 15 minutes just in case anyone  
6 else comes and wants to speak.

7           So also please use that podium if you want to  
8 speak. Please speak close into the microphone. The  
9 right side of the podium, there's a button you can use  
10 to raise or lower the podium.

11           Just remember that our court reporters are  
12 transcribing everything you say today. So if you're not  
13 speaking slowly and clearly, they're going to have a  
14 hard time doing that.

15           Also one of my personal things. I know I'm not  
16 going to stop anyone from applauding a position they  
17 agree with. I've given up that. (Indecipherable). I'm  
18 not going to make that request. Please be respectful if  
19 someone disagrees with you. Don't boo them or anything  
20 like that. That's all I ask.

21           After this public participation hearing is  
22 over, the court reporters will prepare a written  
23 transcript. The transcript will be provided to myself  
24 and the five commissioners as well as the public and  
25 will be posted on the docket card.

1           So if you have not already signed up to speak  
2 and still want to, you can do so at the table; or after  
3 the folks who have signed up are done, I will ask if  
4 there's anyone else who wants to speak.

5           So with that our first speaker is Sherry  
6 Steel. ]

7                           STATEMENT OF SPEAKER STEELE

8           Hello. So I wanted to point out a few problems  
9 that I've had --

10           UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can't hear you.

11           SPEAKER STEELE: I wanted to point out a few  
12 problems that I've had living in rural areas for most of  
13 my adult life and most of my childhood. People really  
14 do rely on these as their mode of calling 911, and for  
15 their basic -- calling schools, calling doctors. They  
16 really are critical.

17           And when I tried to get service in  
18 Sebastopol -- back in 2013 or 2014, I tried to get a  
19 landline because I wanted -- you know, during power  
20 outages or whatever, I just wanted that sense of  
21 security. They wanted \$60 or \$70 a month for a basic --  
22 you know, a super basic package where I could get -- for  
23 five or \$10 a month, I could get an internet line.

24           They were really pushing it when I worked out  
25 at Youngkin Lodge, out in Forestville, which is really



1 not that far out of town when you think about it.

2 They had texts come out from AT&T, and they --  
3 continuously. They almost didn't work for the entire  
4 winter months when it rained. And the texts had  
5 explained -- they were older. They had been doing this.  
6 They were ready to retire. They were very, very open  
7 with what they felt. And they had said that AT&T was no  
8 longer maintaining the lines.

9 This was back in 2014 or '15, but they were  
10 just letting them deteriorate. They weren't replacing  
11 anything. They weren't maintaining anything because  
12 they were trying to completely be done with having to be  
13 a Carrier of Last Resort and was that their strategy.

14 So it was strategy that they were implementing.  
15 It wasn't just, Oh, we can't afford it.

16 This has been intentional and deliberate from  
17 the get-go because they want to drop that, and so the  
18 CPUC is our protective factor, you know.

19 And at some point, if this is allowed -- and at  
20 some -- I know we're not -- it's not a decision, but the  
21 rules out of that to come, if it changes, it will -- if  
22 that infrastructure is gone, we all know it will never  
23 come back in the form it is in today.

24 Regardless of whether we find out that, oh,  
25 maybe we shouldn't have let that happen or, oh, there's

1 not really a suitable alternative.

2 And I am concerned that with the -- you know,  
3 the expansion of broadband into rural areas, it's got a  
4 long way to go. I know that a lot of people -- when we  
5 live in town, it seems that everybody does, but a lot of  
6 people don't live in town. A lot of people live more  
7 than a half hour, even an hour from a small town.

8 And with the new changes -- and I'm not going  
9 to pretend that I have any expertise in this topic, but  
10 just what I hear in the news is that the expansion of  
11 broadband has been happening and pushing into rural  
12 areas. And that now Trump wants to have Starlink be  
13 that carrier.

14 And if that were to happen, then our  
15 infrastructure is going to be less stable than with the  
16 internet we already have. You know, it's a wired  
17 connection. So that's something to consider --

18 (Timer notification.)

19 SPEAKER STEELE: Thank you.

20 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you very much for your  
21 comments.

22 Our next speaker is Annie Barbour.

23 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER BARBOUR

24 Hi, everybody. My name Annie Barbour. I'm a  
25 native to Santa Rosa, and I work for a nonprofit United

1 Policyholders that helps people navigate their insurance  
2 after a disaster. We also do a ton of preparedness  
3 events.

4 People in rural communities deserve the  
5 technology to be alerted when they are in danger. So as  
6 opposed to trying to save this antiquated, broken system  
7 that is not reliable for people, we need to learn from  
8 our mistakes.

9 Santa Rosa learned a lot in the Tubbs Fire. We  
10 are not passing that along. LA, they lost people in the  
11 fire. They did not have good internet.

12 Watch Duty is the most amazing app. You can't  
13 get it on a landline. It has to go to a cell phone.  
14 The Office of Emergency Services in LA was using that  
15 app as their resource as to what was going on. We don't  
16 want to go backwards.

17 I'm also a 2017 Tubbs Fire survivor from Santa  
18 Rosa, and in my fire, I got an alert at 2:00 in the  
19 morning, and it will always stay with me. It said,  
20 "Fire jumped 101, heading to Coffee Park, evacuate  
21 immediately." And I did. I got out in about  
22 two-and-a-half minutes. My neighbor was about two  
23 minutes behind me and the back bumper of her car was  
24 melted.

25 I can't express enough to you how important it

1 is that people have the technology that's available. We  
2 need to bolster this up. The system needs to be  
3 bolstered up. Fix the system so that everybody has the  
4 same access to good emergency alerts. The night of the  
5 fire, my cell phone went off. My landline never did.

6 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

7 Our next speaker is Mele Blackstone.

8 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER BLACKSTONE

9 Good evening, Commissioners, my name is Mele  
10 Blackstone, and I'm the principal of an elementary  
11 school in Sonoma county. I also live in this county and  
12 care deeply about the well-being and success of our  
13 students, families, and educators.

14 People of all ages benefit from the power of  
15 the internet. For students and teachers success --  
16 sorry -- for students and teachers access to reliable,  
17 fast internet is no longer optional; it's essential.

18 During the pandemic, it became very clear how  
19 much we depend on it for closing the opportunity gap  
20 amongst our students and families. That's why I  
21 strongly support modernizing California's communication  
22 network to ensure that all of our communities,  
23 especially the underserved ones, have access to  
24 reliable, fast and affordable connectivity.

25 Fast, reliable internet is not a luxury. It's

1 an equity issue for our youth; yet we're still relying  
2 on a 150-year-old copper network. It's outdated,  
3 inefficient, and it's holding our communities back  
4 particularly in rural or lower-income areas of the  
5 county.

6 I urge you to support the modernization of  
7 California's Carrier of Last Resort policy so every  
8 family, regardless of their zip code or income, can  
9 access the affordable, high-speed internet they deserve.

10 This is fundamentally about opportunity. When  
11 our communities have access to strong, reliable  
12 broadband, our students can study, families can thrive,  
13 and small businesses can grow.

14 To ensure that Sonoma county isn't left behind  
15 as the world continues to move forward, let's push for  
16 smart investment in modern infrastructure to close the  
17 digital divide and make sure that every resident in  
18 Sonoma county is connected and empowered. Thank you.

19 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you for your comments.

20 Our next speaker is Nyla Blair.

21 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER BLAIR

22 Hello. Can you hear me?

23 ALJ GLEGOLA: Yes.

24 Okay. So building biologist Dr. Joel Moscovitz  
25 from Building Biologists said in June 2024, "The

1 California Public Utilities Commission said AT&T had to  
2 remain the Carrier of Last Resort," which means they  
3 have to continue to service landlines. Later that same  
4 month, the California Public Utilities Commission made a  
5 new rule. They changed the definition of Carrier of  
6 Last Resort; therefore, the Carrier of Last Resort can  
7 be a wireless company.

8 Now that they changed the definition, that  
9 means I cannot use my landline, which means I'll have  
10 radio frequency radiating in my home. I'm a vulnerable  
11 senior. Today is my 84th birthday, and I'm in -- using  
12 part of birthday day to have this message because it's  
13 very important to me.

14 This electromagnetic frequency is cumulative  
15 and I do not want it. Fifty percent of United States'  
16 citizens have chronic illnesses. This was not happening  
17 before EMFs. Fiber optics is good if you can turn off  
18 the antenna, but nobody knows how to turn off the  
19 antenna so that means I have to have radiation in my  
20 house all the time. Thousands of studies have proven  
21 radiation is harmful to the human body and it's  
22 cumulative. With routers you cannot turn off the  
23 antennae. The compounds cannot turn off the antennae.

24 We are electrical beings, and there's danger  
25 when all this extra electricity is coming with us,

1 electromagnetic frequency radiation, all the time.

2 Even the world health organization said  
3 electromagnetic frequency that comes from cell phone is  
4 possibly carcinogenic. Cell phone -- using a cell phone  
5 for 30 minutes a day can increase brain tumor risk by 40  
6 percent. That's an inter-phone study. Children are  
7 especially at risk because they have thinner skeletons.  
8 Thank you.

9 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you very much for your  
10 comments and for joining us on your birthday.

11 Our next speaker is John Diamante.

12 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER DIAMANTE

13 Good afternoon, Commissioners, and public. I  
14 am John Diamante. I run a landline at home in  
15 Sausalito, in the boonies, Mendocino county, the ranch,  
16 landline. I think, apart from food, an absolute  
17 necessity of life, clean air, water, energy, plus  
18 connectivity. We absolutely cannot do without these  
19 things, connectivity.

20 To look at where we are, we have gone being  
21 consumers of the best regulated, best monopoly utility  
22 in the world. The hardware in the last 68 years, with a  
23 dime, you could call anywhere with absolutely fidelity.  
24 We were accustomed to this from that utility.

25 Fast forward. We are now consumers of

1     psychically obsolescent devices and pretty much the  
2     market for that. In pursuing that market, the public  
3     obligation of connectivity has been lost, and all these  
4     companies have wanted to drop the copper and  
5     connectivity. Where regulators have failed with federal  
6     and state legislation, and the mandate of the Commission  
7     is to protect the connectivity. The performance of a  
8     public utility must come before profit. So these  
9     companies must deliver landline connectivity where  
10    necessary and needed and where preferable, where  
11    preferable -- where preferable.

12             That's pretty much it. Performance over  
13    profit, which falls to the Commission. I will pursue  
14    the need for landline connectivity to my last breath.  
15    The rules of the Commission must modify or adopt must  
16    keep this necessity of connectivity primary.

17             We cannot depend on cell phones, but we need a  
18    technological leap for a mobile phone where we do not  
19    have to build-out this next generation of low earth  
20    orbiting satellites from 22,000 to 30,000, which Bezos  
21    and boy Elon want to put up, which is going to  
22    obliterate all sorts of conveniences, see the heavens,  
23    so we're in that -- we're in that kind of vandalizing --

24             (Timer notification.)

25             SPEAKER DIAMANTE: -- so we need the landline,



1 connectivity --

2 (Timer notification.)

3 SPEAKER DIAMANTE: -- regulated performance  
4 over profit. Thank you.

5 ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you very much for your  
6 comments.

7 Our next speaker is Dan Kabage.

8 STATEMENT OF SPEAKER KABAGE

9 Hi. Most of our existing landline customers  
10 have been here for 30 or 50 years, and a lot of them  
11 don't have the technology to move on if we had it. I'm  
12 sure they'd love to have it, but some of them don't have  
13 that access. I don't know what has changed from a year  
14 ago except for the tactics.

15 The customers are receiving letters saying  
16 they're getting rid of this technology. They're going  
17 to switch them over to either the wireless or VoIP.

18 In one case, a lady was contacted and they  
19 said, We're switching you over.

20 They sent her a wireless box. She had no cell  
21 signal there. She called back to get her landline, and  
22 they said, Sorry. We don't offer that service.

23 If we're still in COLR, why is this happening?  
24 Many instances -- the City of Santa Rosa just ordered 22  
25 lines to the county. Why are we serving them and not

1 the outlying people who have been paying for 50 years  
2 building this company?

3           Until this -- until AT&T is released from  
4 Carrier of Last Resort, nobody should receive these  
5 letters again. If we had the technology, I'd jump at  
6 it. I got fiber. I got my landline. That's it.

7           ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you very much for your  
8 comments.

9           Those are the speakers that have signed up. Is  
10 there anyone else that would like to speak?

11           (No response.)

12           ALJ GLEGOLA: Looks like no one does.

13           So we are going to take a 10-minute break, and  
14 we'll be back at 6:46 to see if there is anyone else  
15 that wants to talk. Those of you who have been generous  
16 with your time, please feel no obligation to stay or  
17 please feel welcome to if you want to, but I know that  
18 you have other places to be, birthday parties, et  
19 cetera.

20           So with that, we are off the record.           ]

21           (Off the record.)

22           ALJ GLEGOLA: We are back on the record. We  
23 went off the record to give anyone who would like to  
24 speak a chance to sign up or anyone who wanted to come  
25 that wasn't already here if they wanted to speak.

1           As far as I know, no one has signed up to  
2 speak. I'm not seeing any additions to the list. So I  
3 just want to ask is there anyone else that wishes to  
4 speak?

5           (No response.)

6           ALJ GLEGOLA: Seeing none, Commissioner  
7 Reynolds, do you have any final remarks?

8           COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: I just want to thank  
9 everyone for joining us this evening. We really  
10 appreciate your comments and they will help contribute  
11 to our decisionmaking.

12          Thank you.

13          ALJ GLEGOLA: Commissioner Houck.

14          COMMISSIONER HOUCK: I just want to join  
15 Commissioner Reynolds in thanking everyone for being  
16 here today. Your comments are really important.

17          Thank you.

18          ALJ GLEGOLA: Thank you.

19          And I also want to --

20          UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Judge, there's quite a  
21 few people coming. They just got off of work at 6:30.  
22 That's your call. It's up to you guys.

23          ALJ GLEGOLA: There's definitely people coming?

24          UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Twelve people. I  
25 can't say exactly. It's up to you.

1 ALJ GLEGOLA: Well, why don't we wait. We'll  
2 go off line for another 15 minutes and hopefully they're  
3 here.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I apologize.

5 ALJ GLEGOLA: We want to hear from them. If  
6 they're working, this is their chance. I get it.

7 So we will go off the record and be back at  
8 7:00.

9 (Off the record.)

10 ALJ GLEGOLA: I don't see any additions to the  
11 speakers list. So we did give an extra 15 minutes, and  
12 I don't see anyone.

13 So with that, Commissioner, do you have any  
14 final, final comments?

15 COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: I want to thank  
16 everyone again for spending time with us this evening.  
17 Really appreciate your comments.

18 ALJ GLEGOLA: And Commissioner Houck?

19 COMMISSIONER HOUCK: Just also join with  
20 Commissioner Reynolds thanking everyone for being here.

21 ALJ GLEGOLA: And I give my thanks. This  
22 concludes the 6:00 p.m. Public Participation Hearing for  
23 Rulemaking 24-06-012.

24 We are adjourned and off the record.

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(At the hour of 7:01 p.m., this matter having  
been continued to 6:00 p.m., May 5, 2025, the  
Commission then adjourned.)

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BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
OF THE  
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CSR NO. 14092

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