

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



FILED
05/18/26
04:59 PM
A2507016

Joint Application of Charter Communications, Inc., Charter Communications Holdings, LLC, and Cox Enterprises, Inc. for Approval Pursuant to Public Utilities Code Section 854 of the Indirect Transfer of Control of Cox California Telcom, LLC (U-5684-C).

Application 25-07-016

CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS, INC. AND CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS HOLDINGS, LLC'S NOTICE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATION

Pursuant to Rule 8.4(a) of the California Public Utilities Commission's ("Commission") Rules of Practice and Procedure, Charter Communications, Inc. and Charter Communications Holdings, LLC (collectively, "Charter") hereby provide notice of an ex parte communication in the above-captioned proceeding with Hazel Miranda, Chief of Staff to President Reynolds; Michael Mullaney, Senior Advisor to President Reynolds; Justin Ong, Chief of Staff to Commissioner Baker; and Stephen Neal, Legal and Policy Advisor to Commissioner Baker.

The meeting was held by videoconference on May 13, 2026 at 12:15 p.m. and lasted approximately 35 minutes. No written materials were presented. The non-Commission attendees in the meeting were Adam Falk, Senior Vice President, State Government Affairs, Charter; Torry Somers, Vice President, State Government Affairs, Charter; Curt Stamp, Vice President of Government and Regulatory Affairs, Cox Enterprises, Inc.; and Marybel Batjer, Partner, California Strategies.

Charter discussed the procedural status of the proceeding, including that evidentiary hearings concluded approximately three weeks ago; opening briefs are due May 22, 2026, and reply briefs are due June 5, 2026; Charter, the Public Advocates Office ("Cal Advocates"), and the California Emerging Technology Fund ("CETF") submitted settlement agreements ("Settlements") on April 30, 2026; and, on May 1, 2026, the Joint Applicants moved to align

comments on the Settlements with the briefing schedule and requested a proposed decision by July 14 and a final decision by August 13, 2026.

Charter also addressed the comprehensive nature of the Settlements, the importance of a final decision by August 13, 2026, and Charter's position that the record does not support additional conditions.

1. Comprehensive Settlements and Public Benefits

Charter explained that the Settlements with CETF and Cal Advocates comprehensively address issues raised in the proceeding and make additional conditions unnecessary. The settlements address, among other things, affordable broadband, promotional pricing, network upgrades and deployment, and digital access funding. Key terms include:

- A 100/20 Mbps broadband offering for low-income customers at \$20 per month for five years, representing a 60% discount from Charter's standard rate.
- The offering will be available to LifeLine Pilot customers, who may use the \$20 subsidy to receive service at no cost, and to customers who meet LifeLine eligibility criteria but do not enroll in the LifeLine process.
 - The Settlements significantly expand eligibility for the low-income broadband offering.
- The offering will be available to both new and existing customers, even though these programs are typically only provided to new customers.
- Three additional LifeLine Pilot tiers:
 - 100/20 Mbps plus home phone for \$30 per month;
 - 500/20 Mbps standalone for \$50 per month; and
 - 500/20 Mbps plus home phone for \$50 per month.

- A persistent \$50 monthly rate for 500/20 Mbps service, matching Charter’s current promotional price, with wireline voice included at that same price for customers electing voice service. Customers taking both the 500/20 Mbps broadband and wireline voice together may use the \$30 LifeLine Pilot subsidy, reducing the effective monthly cost to \$20, and, for those taking the 100/20 plus wireline voice together, the service would be at no cost.
- Statewide standardization of promotional pricing, with limited exceptions.
- A \$30 million contribution to CETF-administered digital access and affordability programs, with \$2.5 million directed to CETF’s device-refurbishment initiative.
- A \$275 million investment over three years to upgrade Charter’s network to support symmetrical gigabit service across its legacy service areas, plus 500/20 Mbps service and Wi-Fi at 50 community anchor institutions for public use.
- A commitment, subject to specified conditions, to serve as a backstop provider for approximately 5,000 remaining unserved locations if provisional BEAD awards to other providers do not result in funded deployment and a \$5 million investment in community development financial institutions through the Spectrum Community Loan Fund program to help small businesses, primarily in Environmental and Social Justice communities who need access to capital.
- A \$2 million commitment to expand VetConnect, Charter’s workforce training program for transitioning service members.

Charter explained that these public-interest benefits from the Settlements, together with the lower prices and greater value Cox customers are expected to receive through Charter’s offerings,

and benefits to Cox employees, support timely approval of the indirect transfer of control of Cox California.

2. Importance of a Final Decision by August 13, 2026

Charter emphasized that Commission approval by August 13, 2026 is necessary. The next Commission meeting after August 13 is September 3, 2026, only 12 days before expiration of Hart-Scott-Rodino Act (“HSR”) clearance on September 15, 2026. Charter stated that action on September 3 would leave an insufficient margin between Commission consideration and HSR clearance expiration and that missing the September 15, 2026 HSR deadline would jeopardize the Transaction and the consumer benefits it would produce, including those reflected in the Settlements.

Charter therefore explained that consideration at the August 13, 2026 meeting is necessary to ensure the Transaction can proceed. To facilitate that schedule, the Joint Applicants requested that comments on the Settlements be aligned with the current briefing schedule, with opening comments due May 22, 2026, and replies due June 5, 2026. Alternatively, Charter proposed that parties could receive a full 30 days for opening comments (due on June 1, 2026), with reply comments aligned to coincide with the reply briefs due on June 5, 2026. Either approach would provide the Commission with a complete record by June 5, 2026, allowing time for a proposed decision by July 14, 2026 and a final decision on August 13, 2026.

3. Adverse Impact and Lack of Support for Additional Wholesale-Service Conditions

Charter also raised concerns regarding conditions proposed by non-settling intervenors, particularly any requirement that Charter provide wholesale backhaul or transport services to other internet service providers, including competitors.

Charter explained that it has no obligation to operate an open-access network and that any condition requiring common-carrier-style wholesale access would materially affect Charter's ability to close the Transaction and would jeopardize the Transaction and its public benefits, including those in the Settlements.

4. No Need For, or Record Support for Additional Deployment Conditions

With respect to broadband deployment, Charter explained that, under the Commission's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment ("BEAD") Final Proposal, every unserved and underserved location in Charter's service territory is already covered by a provisional BEAD award. Charter further explained that additional deployment conditions would be cost-prohibitive and unnecessary in light of the Settlements and would also jeopardize the Transaction.

Charter reiterated its commitments under the Settlements to: (1) invest \$275 million over three years to enable symmetrical gigabit capability across its footprint; and (2) if California's provisional BEAD awards do not receive final approval, and subject to certain exceptions, submit at least one application for state or federal broadband grant funding to deploy last-mile infrastructure to remaining locations, with a Charter capital contribution of up to \$3,000 per funded location.

Respectfully submitted on this 18th day of May, 2026, in San Francisco, California.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Zeb C. Zankel

Zeb C. Zankel
Jenner & Block LLP
525 Market Street, 29th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
Tel: (628) 267-6812
Email: ZZankel@jenner.com