California Public Utilities Commission
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CPUC Approves Charter/Cox Merger with Strong Consumer Protections, Broadband Investments, and Digital Equity Commitments

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 13, 2026 – The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today approved the merger of Cox California Telcom, LLC to Charter Communications, Inc., subject to two settlement agreements and a comprehensive set of enforceable conditions designed to protect consumers, expand broadband access, and advance digital equity across California.

The CPUC approved the transaction by adopting two settlement agreements between the companies and consumer groups (California Public Advocates Office and California Emerging Technology Fund), with minor clarifications, and imposing five additional conditions. In its decision, the CPUC found that, taken together, these measures ensure the transaction is in the public interest, delivers substantial benefits for California residents, businesses, and communities, and provides for strong regulatory oversight and accountability.

"This decision secures significant commitments that will benefit Californians through expanded affordable broadband options, major infrastructure investments, improved customer protections, and meaningful support for digital inclusion," said Commissioner Matthew Baker, who is assigned to the proceeding. "The CPUC's approval reflects a careful review of the proposed transaction and ensures public interest benefits are backed by enforceable conditions."

As part of today's decision, the post-merger company must comply with a broad range of consumer protection, affordability, infrastructure, and community investment commitments, including:

- New affordable broadband offerings for low-income Californians, including multiple California LifeLine service tiers and standalone broadband plans available for five years.

- A $30 million investment in digital inclusion initiatives, including broadband adoption, digital literacy training, community outreach, and device access for underserved communities.
- At least $275 million to upgrade the company's California network, completing symmetrical one-gigabit service capability across legacy California service areas within three years.
- Five years of free broadband and Wi-Fi service for 50 eligible community anchor institutions, including schools, libraries, and community centers.
- Expanded outreach and enrollment assistance to help eligible households access affordable broadband services.
- $5 million in Community Development Financial Institutions to expand access to capital for underserved California small businesses.
- Expanded workforce development through the VetConnect program and strengthened supplier diversity commitments.

The CPUC also adopted a number of new customer protections designed to improve service quality and ensure consumers receive the benefits of the transaction. These include:

- Automatic bill credits for qualifying service outages lasting two hours or longer.
- Continued honoring of eligible residential "price for life" service agreements.
- Elimination of equipment exchange fees when customers upgrade or downgrade qualifying residential cable television service or return rented equipment in-person.
- Enhanced battery backup options and annual customer notices for residential wireline voice service.
- New reporting and accountability requirements to monitor compliance with CPUC-ordered conditions.

The decision also includes significant commitments supporting Public, Educational, and Government (PEG) access channels, requiring improved transparency, expanded high-definition distribution, electronic program guide listings, and compliance with California law governing PEG channel support.

To ensure the approved commitments are fully implemented, CPUC staff will establish an enforcement and compliance program, including reporting requirements and oversight of the transaction conditions.

“This transaction will have a significant impact on communities across the Southern California region, and our responsibility is to make sure it delivers real benefits for the people who live here. That means better service, affordable options, continued investment in our communities, and accountability for the commitments being made today. Southern California customers deserve to see those promises translate into results,” said Commissioner Christine Harada.

The approval follows an extensive public review process and incorporates two settlement agreements negotiated with the Public Advocates Office and the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF), together with additional mitigation measures adopted by the CPUC.

More Information

- Proposal Approved
- Docket Card

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