

By Senator Siplin

19-823-05

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to Lifeline telecommunications  
3           service; amending s. 364.10, F.S.; directing  
4           local exchange telecommunications companies to  
5           notify company customers of the Lifeline  
6           service and the eligibility criteria for  
7           Lifeline participation; requiring the company  
8           to send brochures, pamphlets, or other  
9           materials to the customers at least once each  
10          year in the customer's monthly billing  
11          envelope; providing an effective date.

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13 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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15           Section 1. Subsection (3) of section 364.10, Florida  
16 Statutes, is amended to read:

17           364.10 Undue advantage to person or locality  
18 prohibited; Lifeline service.--

19           (3)(a) Effective September 1, 2003, any local exchange  
20 telecommunications company authorized by the commission to  
21 reduce its switched network access rate under ~~pursuant to~~ s.  
22 364.164 shall have tariffed and shall provide Lifeline service  
23 to any otherwise eligible customer or potential customer who  
24 meets an income eligibility test at 125 percent or less of the  
25 federal poverty income guidelines for Lifeline customers.  
26 However, the company shall provide Lifeline service to a  
27 person 65 years of age or older if the person meets an income  
28 eligibility test at 175 percent or less of the Federal poverty  
29 income guidelines. The ~~Such a~~ test for eligibility must  
30 augment, rather than replace, the eligibility standards  
31 established by federal law and based on participation in

1 certain low-income assistance programs. Each intrastate  
2 interexchange telecommunications company shall, effective  
3 September 1, 2003, file a tariff providing at a minimum the  
4 intrastate interexchange telecommunications carrier's current  
5 Lifeline benefits and exemptions to Lifeline customers who  
6 meet the income eligibility test set forth in this subsection.  
7 The Office of Public Counsel shall certify and maintain claims  
8 submitted by a customer for eligibility under the income test  
9 authorized by this subsection.

10 (b) Each local exchange telecommunications company  
11 subject to this subsection shall provide to each state and  
12 federal agency providing benefits to persons eligible for  
13 Lifeline service applications, brochures, pamphlets, or other  
14 materials that inform ~~the such~~ persons of their eligibility  
15 for Lifeline, and each state agency providing ~~the such~~  
16 benefits shall furnish the materials to affected persons at  
17 the time they apply for benefits.

18 (c) Each local exchange telecommunications company  
19 subject to this subsection shall notify the company's  
20 customers of the Lifeline service and the eligibility criteria  
21 for Lifeline participation. At least once each year, the  
22 company must include in the customer's monthly billing  
23 envelope the Lifeline brochures, pamphlets, or other materials  
24 promoting participation in the program.

25 ~~(d)(e)~~ Any local exchange telecommunications company  
26 customer receiving Lifeline benefits shall not be subject to  
27 any residential basic local telecommunications service rate  
28 increases authorized by s. 364.164 until the local exchange  
29 telecommunications company reaches parity as defined in s.  
30 364.164(5) or until the customer no longer qualifies for the  
31 Lifeline benefits established by this section or s. 364.105,

1 or unless otherwise determined by the commission upon petition  
2 by a local exchange telecommunications company.

3 (e)~~(d)~~ By December 31, 2003, each state agency that  
4 provides benefits to persons eligible for Lifeline service  
5 shall undertake, in cooperation with the Department of  
6 Children and Family Services, the commission, and  
7 telecommunications companies providing Lifeline services, the  
8 development of procedures to promote Lifeline participation.

9 (f)~~(e)~~ The commission shall report to the Governor,  
10 the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of  
11 Representatives by December 31 each year on the number of  
12 customers who are subscribing to Lifeline service and the  
13 effectiveness of any procedures to promote participation.

14 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2005.

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17 SENATE SUMMARY

18 Directs local exchange telecommunications companies to  
19 notify company customers of the Lifeline service and the  
20 eligibility criteria for Lifeline participation. Requires  
21 companies to send brochures, pamphlets, or other  
22 materials to the customers at least once each year in the  
23 customer's monthly billing envelope.  
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