

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Competitive Carrier Line Count Report and)	OMB Control No. 3060-0986
Self-Certification as a Rural Carrier)	

PRA COMMENTS OF CRICKET COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

Cricket Communications, Inc. (“Cricket”) files these comments in response to the *Federal Register* notice published on February 25, 2013 in connection with the above-captioned matter (the “Notice”). The Notice: (i) indicates that the Commission has proposed to introduce a new FCC Form 481, which would collect information from recipients of universal service support on an annual basis; and (ii) seeks public input regarding, *inter alia*, “ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected[.]”¹ As discussed below, Cricket requests that the Commission clarify certain elements of the proposed FCC Form 481 as they would pertain to eligible telecommunications carriers (“ETCs”) that have been designated as such only with respect to federal and state Lifeline support mechanisms (“Lifeline-only ETCs”).

Cricket is an active participant in the Lifeline program, and has been designated as a Lifeline-only ETC in 27 states and the District of Columbia. As a responsible program participant that has long supported the Commission’s efforts to curb waste, fraud, and abuse, Cricket recognizes the need to collect information about how Lifeline support is used so as to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the program. At the same time, Cricket believes that it would be prudent to revise certain aspects of FCC Form 481 to ensure that it does not place an

¹ See 78 FED. REG. 12750, 12750-12751 (Feb. 25, 2013).

undue burden on Lifeline-only ETCs and thus frustrate their ability to meet the needs of potential end-user beneficiaries of the Lifeline program.

First, Cricket requests that the Commission clarify that Lifeline-only ETCs must report information only about complaints per 1,000 *Lifeline* customers in response to Lines 400-420 of FCC Form 481.² This clarification would be consistent with the stated function of FCC Form 481—*i.e.*, to collect information to enable the Commission to ensure that “universal service funds are used for their intended purposes.”³ The “intended purposes” of the Lifeline program are limited to the efficient provision of quality service to the program’s end-user beneficiaries; in contrast, high-cost support programs subsidize an ETC’s network more broadly, making information about *overall* network performance and the quality of service provided to *all* customers more relevant. By requiring Lifeline-only ETCs to provide information about *non*-Lifeline customers, the Bureau and USAC would exceed the planned scope of FCC Form 481, complicate efforts to evaluate the success of the Lifeline program, and impose unnecessary costs on service providers (*e.g.*, by requiring them to implement expensive system modifications) that would hamper their ability and incentive to serve low-income consumers.

Second, Cricket requests that the Commission clarify that Lifeline-only ETCs need not report complaints with respect to broadband services they may provide, as the Lifeline program currently does not provide support for broadband services (with the exception of a few

² The draft instructions for Lines 410 and 420 of FCC Form 481 suggest that respondents should provide information about complaints as derived from “the amount reported on Line 070” Instructions, Draft FCC Form 481, at 9-10. “Line 070” does not appear anywhere in the form. Cricket suggests that the Commission modify FCC Form 481 to request, through Line 070 (or an equivalent) the total number of supported lines served by an ETC (*i.e.*, all lines served by “high-cost” ETCs, and all Lifeline customers in areas served by “Lifeline-only” ETCs). Respondents then could provide information about complaints per 1,000 supported lines.

³ See *Connect America Fund*, Report and Order, 26 FCC Rcd 17663, at ¶ 580 (2011).

ongoing pilot programs). The draft instructions appear to reflect as much; the instructions for Lines 430, 440, and 450 (relating to broadband service complaints) omit any reference to Section 54.422 of the Commission's rules, which *is* referenced in the instructions for Lines 400, 410, and 420 (relating to voice service complaints).⁴ However, in the draft form itself, the intersection of Line 430 and the "54.422 Req. Complete" column has a solid outline, suggesting that Lifeline-only ETCs should respond. Cricket urges the Commission to eliminate that solid outline, and with it any resulting confusion.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Matthew A. Brill

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⁴ Instructions, Draft FCC Form 481, at 9-10.