

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

In the Matter of the Petition of United Fiber, LLC)
For Expanded Designation as an Eligible)
Telecommunications Carrier Pursuant to Section)
214(e)(2) of the Communications Act of 1934,)
As Amended)
Case No. DA-2025-0258

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

COMES NOW the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission, by and through counsel, and for its *Recommendation* in this matter hereby states:

1. On March 26, 2025, United Fiber, LLC d/b/a United Fiber MO, LLC (“United Fiber”) filed an application for expansion of the area associated with their designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (“ETC”).¹

2. On March 27, 2025, the Commission issued its *Order Directing Notice, Setting Intervention Deadline, and Directing Staff to File a Recommendation* in which the Commission ordered Staff to file a recommendation no later than May 12, 2025.

3. United Fiber is presently certificated in the state of Missouri as an interconnected voice over internet protocol (“IVoIP”) services provider. United Fiber and TurboNet Technologies, Inc. (“TurboNet”) were recently granted consent by the Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”) for the transfer of TurboNet’s Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (“RDOF”) support and service obligations to United Fiber. United Fiber seeks to expand its ETC designation to these census blocks. United Fiber also seeks to expand its ETC area for the purpose of solely receiving low-income support to additional service areas. Likewise, the company seeks to participate in the

¹ ETC status granted in Case No. RA-2019-0087 and subsequently expanded in Case No. DA-2021-0200. United Fiber currently is receiving federal high-cost support to expand broadband service to approximately 7,753 Missouri locations.

Missouri USF program in all areas in Missouri where United Fiber is designated as an ETC.

4. Federal authority enables state commissions to grant ETC status to a company.² Missouri's ETC application requirements are contained in Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-31.016. As explained in Staff's *Memorandum*, attached hereto as Appendix A, Staff reviewed United Fiber's request for compliance with Missouri's Rules as well as federal requirements and finds that United Fiber has adequately met all requirements. Consequently, Staff supports the United Fiber's application for expansion of their ETC status.

WHEREFORE, Staff recommends that the Commission approve United Fiber's request for expansion of its designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier for the purpose of receiving federal universal service funding in the areas identified in Exhibits A and B of the company's application. Further, Staff recommends the Commission's order specify the area identified in Exhibit A is for the purpose of receiving both high-cost and low-income support, while the area identified in Exhibit B is solely for the purpose of receiving low income support. Finally, Staff recommends the order approve United Fiber's request to begin receiving Missouri USF funding; and grant such other and further relief as the Commission considers just in the circumstances.

² 47 U.S.C. §214(e)(2) and FCC rule §54.201.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Mark Johnson

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Missouri Public Service Commission

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing was served by electronic mail, or First Class United States Postal Mail, postage prepaid, on this 12th day of May, 2025, to all counsel of record.

/s/ Mark Johnson

MEMORANDUM

To: Missouri Public Service Commission Official Case File
Case No. DA-2025-0258

From: Kari Salsman, Senior Research/Data Analyst
John Van Eschen, Regulatory Compliance Manager
Telecommunications Department

Subject: Staff's Recommendation to Approve United Fiber, LLC
d/b/a United Fiber MO, LLC's Request for Expansion of Existing
ETC Designation

Date: May 12, 2025

On March 26, 2025, United Fiber, LLC d/b/a United Fiber MO, LLC (United Fiber) filed an application for expansion of the area associated with their designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC).¹ The company is a registered IVoIP provider in Missouri.² United Fiber and TurboNet Technologies, Inc. (TurboNet) were recently granted consent by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for the transfer of TurboNet's Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) support and service obligations to United Fiber.³ United Fiber seeks to expand its ETC designation to these census blocks. United Fiber also wants to expand its ETC area for the purpose of solely receiving low-income support to additional service areas. Likewise, the company wants to participate in the Missouri USF program in all areas in Missouri where United Fiber is designated as an ETC.⁴

Federal authority enables state commissions to grant ETC status to a company.⁵ Missouri's ETC application requirements are contained in existing Missouri Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-31.016. Staff reviewed the company's request for compliance with Missouri's Rules as well as federal requirements. In Staff's opinion the company has adequately met all requirements. Consequently, Staff supports the United Fiber's application for expansion of their ETC status.

Staff recommends the Commission expand United Fiber's ETC area for the purpose of receiving federal universal service funding in the areas identified in Exhibits A and B of the company's application. The order should specify the area identified in Exhibit A is for the purpose of receiving both high-cost and low income support while the area

¹ ETC status granted in Case No. RA-2019-0087 and subsequently expanded in Case No. DA-2021-0200. The company currently is receiving federal high-cost support to expand broadband service to approximately 7,753 Missouri locations.

² Case No. RA-2019-0087.

³ Public Notice: Application granted for the acquisition of certain assets of TurboNet Technologies Inc. to United Fiber LLC; DA-25-297; released April 2, 2025.

⁴ Census Block Service for High-Cost and Low-Income areas are listed in Exhibit A of ETC expansion application. Low-Income only areas are listed in Exhibit B of the ETC expansion application.

⁵ 47 U.S.C. §214(e)(2) and FCC rule §54.201.

identified in Exhibit B is solely for the purpose of receiving low income support. In addition, the order should approve United Fiber's request to begin receiving Missouri USF funding.