

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE REQUEST OF )  
CITIZENS TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY )  
OF MINNESOTA, LLC STUDY AREA: 361123 )  
FOR CERTIFICATION REGARDING ITS USE )  
OF FEDERAL UNIVERSAL SERVICE SUPPORT )**

**ORDER GRANTING  
WAIVER AND CERTIFICATION**

**TC16-020**

On June 29, 2016, the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received a filing from Citizens Telecommunications Company of Minnesota, LLC (Company) regarding its request for certification regarding its use of federal universal service support. The Company is also requesting the Commission grant a waiver of the Commission's eligible telecommunication's carrier (ETC) filing requirements pursuant to ARSD 20:10:32:56, on grounds that the reporting requirements in support of ETC certification are unduly burdensome and unnecessary. The purpose of this filing was to provide information constituting the Company's plan for the use of its federal universal service support and to otherwise verify that the Company will use all federal universal service support received in a manner that is consistent with the federal universal service provisions of 47 U.S.C. § 254. Pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.314(a), in order for an eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) to receive support pursuant to the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) high-cost program, a state must file an annual certification with the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) and the FCC stating that all federal high-cost support provided to the ETC "was used in the preceding calendar year and will be used in the coming calendar year only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended."

On June 30, 2016, the Commission electronically transmitted notice of the filing and intervention deadline of July 15, 2016, to interested individuals and entities. No parties sought intervention. On July 28, 2016, the Company responded to Staff's data request.

At its regularly scheduled meeting of August 30, 2016, the Commission considered this matter. The Commission has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapter 49-31 and 47 U.S.C. § 254. The Commission unanimously voted to grant a one-year waiver pursuant to ARSD 20:10:32:56, finding that compliance with the certification requirements is unduly burdensome and unnecessary. The Commission also unanimously voted to approve the Company's request for certification. The Commission finds that the Company is eligible to receive federal support. The Commission finds that all federal high-cost support provided to the Company was used in the preceding calendar year and will be used in the coming calendar year only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended. It is therefore

ORDERED, that a one year waiver pursuant to ARSD 20:10:32:56 is hereby granted. It is further

ORDERED, that the Company is eligible to receive federal support as all federal high-cost support provided to the Company was used in the preceding calendar year and will be used in the coming calendar year only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended. It is further

ORDERED, that the Commission approves the Company's request for certification.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 6th day of September, 2016.

<b>CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE</b>
The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list electronically.
By: <u>Adam deHueck</u>
Date: <u>9/6/16</u>
(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Chris Nelson  
CHRIS NELSON, Chairman

Kristie Eiegen  
KRISTIE EIEGEN, Commissioner

Gary Hanson  
GARY HANSON, Commissioner