

# **THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE UTILITY CONSUMER ADVOCATES**

## **RESOLUTION 2009-04**

### **DECLARING SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL TELEPHONE DISCOUNT LIFELINE AND LINK-UP AWARENESS WEEK AS AN ANNUAL EVENT**

**WHEREAS**, in today's highly interconnected world, telephone service provides a lifeline to emergency help and a vital link to family, friends, employers and community; and

**WHEREAS**, not everyone can afford the cost of a home telephone; and

**WHEREAS**, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), State public utility commissions and state consumer advocates have joined to make available to low-income consumers a discount on the connection fee and monthly recurring charge for local telephone service to make such service more affordable and universally available; and

**WHEREAS**, the Link-Up program provides a generous discount to eligible low-income consumers for the installation of telephone service in their homes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Lifeline program provides a discount to eligible low-income customers to reduce the cost of their monthly phone bill; and

**WHEREAS**, the federal Link-Up and Lifeline programs are available to eligible consumers in every state, territory, and commonwealth, and States providing separate funding for Lifeline and Link-Up discounts adopt state-specific eligibility criteria for both federal and state assistance programs; and

**WHEREAS**, the federal Enhanced Link-Up and Lifeline program provides assistance in Tribal Lands; and

**WHEREAS**, consumers in some areas may have a choice of wireline and/or wireless carriers offering local telephone service with the Lifeline discount; and

**WHEREAS**, consumers who need and qualify for Lifeline and Link-Up will only benefit from the programs if they learn about the availability of Lifeline and Link-Up, how to apply, and how to verify their continued eligibility; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (“NASUCA”) has worked in cooperation with the Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”) and the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (“NARUC”) through the Lifeline Across America Task Force to promote awareness of Lifeline and Link-Up programs among other State and federal agencies, cities, counties, organizations, and consumers to promote Lifeline and Link-Up subscribership; and

**WHEREAS**, a number of our nation’s households still do not have telephone service in their homes or are burdened by the full cost of such service; and

**WHEREAS**, barriers such as language or lack of Internet access still prevent eligible consumers from learning about Lifeline and Link-Up,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that NASUCA supports efforts to focus and promote additional outreach efforts during an annual National Telephone Discount Lifeline Awareness Week, scheduled for 2009 as the week of September 14, 2009, in cooperation with NARUC and other federal, state, or local agencies or organizations, including non-profits and community-based organizations; *and be it further*

**RESOLVED**, that the NASUCA Telecommunications Committee and Consumer Protection Committee, with the approval of the Executive Committee of NASUCA, are authorized to take all steps consistent with this Resolution in order to promote National Telephone Discount Lifeline Awareness Week annually and further initiate and promote outreach events during this special week.

Approved by NASUCA

Submitted by the:

Telecommunications Committee

Place: Boston, MA

Date June 30, 2009