

**IN THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
AT NASHVILLE TENNESSEE**

IN RE:)	
)	
Q LINK WIRELESS, LLC'S PETITION FOR)	DOCKET NO.
DESIGNATION AS AN ELIGIBLE)	22-00037
TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER)	

PRE-FILED DIRECT TESTIMONY OF GRACE MAREK

1 **Q. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND BUSINESS ADDRESS.**

2 **A.** My name is Grace Marek. My business address is 502 Deaderick Street, 4th Floor,
3 Nashville, Tennessee.

4 **Q. BY WHOM ARE YOU EMPLOYED AND IN WHAT CAPACITY?**

5 **A.** I am employed by the Tennessee Public Utility Commission. I am a Financial Regulatory
6 Analyst.

7 **Q. DO YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY**
8 **COMMISSION INCLUDE DUTIES RELATED TO ELIGIBLE**
9 **TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER (“ETC”) DESIGNATIONS?**

10 **A.** Yes. I review applications for designation as a wireless ETC and make recommendations
11 to the Tennessee Public Utility Commission (“Commission” or “TPUC”) on whether an applicant
12 meets eligibility requirements and whether granting the application is in the public interest.

13 **Q. IN THE COURSE OF YOUR DUTIES RELATED TO ELIGIBLE**
14 **TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER DESIGNATION APPLICATIONS, ARE YOU**
15 **FAMILIAR WITH THE APPLICATION OF Q LINK WIRELESS, LLC?**

16 **A.** Yes. On April 26, 2022, Q Link Wireless, LLC filed a Petition requesting designation as an
17 ETC for the sole purpose of providing Lifeline service to qualifying Tennessee consumers. The

Commission considered the application of Q Link Wireless, LLC and found that the Company did meet federal eligibility requirements and that it was in the public interest to grant the Company's Petition. The Commission issued an order designating Q Link Wireless, LLC as an ETC on July 8, 2022.

Q. HAVE YOU BECOME AWARE OF ANY CHANGES TO Q LINK WIRELESS, LLC'S ELIGIBILITY TO MAINTAIN ITS DESIGNATION AS AN ETC?

A. Yes. I have reviewed a Notice of Suspension issued by the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC"), which prohibits Q Link Wireless from participating in the Federal Lifeline Program. The Notice of Suspension references the guilty plea of Q Link Wireless, LLC to federal charges relating to defrauding the Federal Lifeline Program of funds. I have also reviewed documents from the United States Federal District Court for the Southern District of Florida, which include a Fact Proffer concerning Q Link Wireless, LLC, the Plea Agreement of Q Link Wireless, LLC, and the Plea Agreement of Issa Asad, the CEO of Q Link Wireless.

Q. BASED UPON YOUR REVIEW OF THESE DOCUMENTS, DOES Q LINK WIRELESS, LLC MEET FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS TO BE DESIGNATED AN ETC WITHIN THE STATE OF TENNESSEE?

A. No. Since Q Link Wireless, LLC has been suspended from participation in the Federal Lifeline Program and has agreed that it will not participate in any program administered by the FCC in its Plea Agreement, Q Link Wireless, LLC does not meet federal eligibility requirements for an ETC designation in Tennessee. In addition, since the Plea Agreement and Fact Proffer indicate that Q Link Wireless, LLC was engaged in activity that defrauded the Federal Lifeline Program of funds between 2013 and 2019, the Petition filed by Q Link Wireless, LLC for an ETC

40 designation contained material misrepresentations of fact that led the Commission to grant such
41 designation.

42 **Q. IS IT IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST FOR Q LINK WIRELESS, LLC TO RETAIN**
43 **ITS ETC DESIGNATION IN TENNESSEE?**

44 **A.** No. On the contrary, given the ineligibility of Q Link Wireless, LLC to participate in the
45 Federal Lifeline Program and any other program administered by the FCC, it is not in the public
46 interest for Q Link Wireless, LLC to retain its ETC designation in Tennessee.

47 **Q. IS IT IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST TO REVOKE THE ETC DESIGNATION OF Q**
48 **LINK WIRELESS, LLC?**

49 **A.** Yes. Q Link Wireless, LLC has pled guilty to defrauding the Federal Lifeline Program of
50 more than \$100 million dollars. As a result of this guilty plea, the Company is no longer eligible
51 to participate in any program administered by the FCC. Therefore, it is in the public interest that
52 the Commission revoke the ETC designation of Q Link Wireless, LLC.

53 **Q. DOES THIS CONCLUDE YOUR TESTIMONY?**

54 **A.** Yes.

STATE OF TENNESSEE)

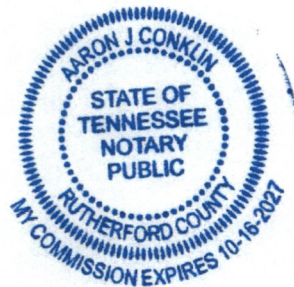
COUNTY OF DAVIDSION)

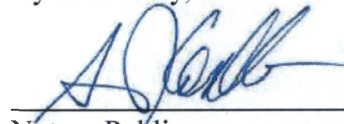
BEFORE ME, the undersigned authority, duly commissioned and qualified in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally came and appeared Grace Marek, being by me first duly sworn and deposed and said that:

She is appearing as a witness on behalf of the Tennessee Public Utility Commission before the Tennessee Public Utility Commission, and if present before the Commission and duly sworn, her testimony would be as set forth in her pre-filed testimony in this matter.


Grace Marek

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 31st day of January, 2025.




Notary Public
My Commission Expires: 10/16/2027