



## Georgia Public Service Commission

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### NEWS RELEASE

## FEE SUNSETS: LANDLINE PHONE USE TO SEE A 2.25- PERCENT SAVINGS ON MONTHLY BILLS

June 15, 2021 – (ATLANTA) – The Georgia Public Service Commission voted unanimously today to reduce a landline phone fee as a 10-year statutory program sunsets.

In 2011, the PSC began implementing a new state law that required telecommunications carriers to reduce the rates they charge each other to complete long distance calls. The practical effect of the law was to bring the costs for in-state long distance calls in line with the costs for out-of-state long distance calls. Prior to implementation by the PSC, it would often cost significantly more to place an in-state long distance call than to call across the country using a landline.

Having now fully implemented this program over a period of 10 years, the PSC voted unanimously on Tuesday to reduce the “Universal Access Fund” fee by 37.5% percent to account for the sunset program. The fee will drop from 6.00% to 3.75% on monthly bills beginning July 1, 2021.

“The bottom line is: business and individual customers in Georgia will see a savings on their phone bills,” said PSC Commissioner Tricia Pridemore, the chair of the PSC Telecommunications Committee. “This is welcome news for anyone with a landline phone.”

A \$50 phone bill would be reduced by slightly more than \$1 per month under the reduced fee, resulting in more than \$13 in annual savings. Although actual numbers are difficult to calculate, it is estimated that Georgia has about 1.7 million landline phones.

"Helping ratepayers save money on all of their utilities is something we strive for every day at the PSC," said PSC Vice Chairman Tim Echols. "While doing that, we also want to improve technology, connectivity and sustainability to serve people for decades into the future."

The Georgia Public Service Commission is a five-member constitutional agency that exercises its authority and influence to ensure Georgia consumers receive safe, reliable and reasonably-priced telecommunications, electric and natural gas service from financially viable and technically competent companies.

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