



**For Immediate Release**



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**Low-income Families Can Stay Connected with Lifeline Telephone Assistance**

**Columbia, S.C. –** Staying connected to local resources and emergency services can improve quality of life and possibly save lives. Access to local emergency services and community resources is vital to our low-income and elderly residents. The Public Service Commission of South Carolina (PSC) and the Office of Regulatory Staff (ORS) want residents to *stay connected* and are reaching out to those who need local telephone service but cannot afford it.

Governor Mark Sanford has proclaimed September 12-18, 2010, to be Lifeline Awareness Week in South Carolina. Lifeline and Link-up assistance programs offer discounts to help residents have access to local telephone service.

Under the Lifeline program, telephone customers who participate in certain public assistance programs are entitled to receive a telephone service discount of \$13.50 per month. Link-up provides a 50% reduction in the telephone service installation charge, up to a maximum discount of \$30, for qualifying households that do not currently have telephone service.

To apply for benefits, contact your local telephone company or the ORS toll-free at 1-866-788-6565.

*The Public Service Commission serves the public by providing fair, open, and effective regulation of the state's public utilities, through the faithful administration of the law and the regulatory process. For more information, please visit the PSC web site at <http://www.psc.sc.gov/>.*

*The Office of Regulatory Staff is an agency of the State of South Carolina. Its mission is to represent the public interest in utility regulation by balancing the concerns of the using and consuming public, the financial integrity of public utilities, and the economic development of South Carolina. For more information, please visit the ORS web site at <http://www.regulatorystaff.sc.gov/>.*

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