

Steven M Brown's SUPPORT Testimony on SB 1023

April 10, 2017

Chair Senator Sara Gelser, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Senator Gelser, and the Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services,

I support Senate Bill (SB) 1023. For a very long time, Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has administrated three telecommunication programs that are relevant to the Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing individuals resided in this state of Oregon very successful.

Since 1987, three telecommunication programs have been demonstrated wonderfully with a very strong record of operating with minimal impact on losses of economic revenues. PUC provides a very strong mechanism at which calls, Residential Services Protection Fund (RSPF) for these programs to ensure that ratepayers are equality compensated with their telephone monthly charges. Likewise, PUC provides a very strong and reasonable charges on ratepayers with the opportunity for them to be heard – whether to increase or decrease their telephone rates while these administrated telecommunication assistance programs are adequately funded.

My reasons for asking the **DO PASS** recommendation are simple.

First, SB 1023 asks for the creation of a new second account at which dedicates the Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing Services fund to sustain operational costs for these needed services provided by the Department of Human Services. I believe the second account will provide the very same trustworthy mechanism that PUC currently uses for other telecommunication assistance programs funded by RSPF account.

Second, new second account will provide telecommunication ratepayers an opportunity to be heard, as well. The second account's fund mechanism will authorize RSPF program manager to make the projections on every six months of RSPF revenues from monthly telephone charges from the ratepayers. If some surpluses remain, the certain percentage will be applied to calculate to allocate the specific dollars from RSPF account be diverted to the second account without hurting existed telecommunication assistance programs or increasing ratepayers' monthly telephone charges. I believe this is an excellent mechanism, so therefore I urge you all on this Committee to support that newly concept that SB 1023 asks.

Finally, as you aware that HB 3268 is pending in a House Committee on Health Care, that legislation will ask to abolish PUC's authority to regulate one of telecommunication assistance programs which is Oregon Assistance Telecommunication (OTAP) program (Lifeline). It is my understanding that HB 3268 would not have the impact on SB 1023 whatsoever, but please make a record that **I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 3268**.

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However, if HB 3268 is ever going to be passed, then SB 1023 would not be effected by abolishing one of existed telecommunication assistance programs that PUC is currently administrated.

So thus, I urge this Committee to pass with a **DO PASS** recommendation on SB 1023 for the full votes on the Senate floor.

Thank you for your time to read and consider my request for your **DO PASS** recommendations.

Best regards,



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