



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **INCOMPAS FCC Lifeline Filing: Don't Kick Competition Out of Reagan's Lifeline Program**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – In comments filed today, [INCOMPAS](#), the internet and competitive networks association, urged the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to reject proposals that strip competitive choice from the Lifeline program and to continue to support the ability of non-facilities-based providers to offer broadband services that its recipients use to seek jobs or finish their homework. INCOMPAS points out that smaller, competitive providers currently serve over 73 percent of the program's subscribers. Ending competition in the program threatens to strand millions of customers without adequate choice and service for this essential program.

In the [filing](#), INCOMPAS argues that by making the program only available to incumbent operators, the FCC will be turning away from pro-competition, bipartisan principles set forth in the Telecommunications Act, giving a monopoly-like advantage to a program started during Ronald Reagan's presidency.

The FCC should be taking measures to further increase competition in the Lifeline program, rather than seeking to roll back the number of eligible providers.

**Read INCOMPAS's full comments here:**

<http://www.incompas.org/Files/filings/2018/INCOMPAS%20Comments%20Lifeline%20WC%20Docket%20No.%2017%2028%2029.pdf>

**In addition to the filing, INCOMPAS CEO Chip Pickering released the following statement:**

"Ronald Reagan, the man who ended the Bell telephone monopoly and kick-started the age of competition also oversaw the creation of the Lifeline program. Lifeline helps Americans climbing the first rung of the ladder find a job and connect to vital services. The FCC's effort to remove competitive choice from the Lifeline program runs counter to his vision and punishes smaller companies who are helping job-seekers access broadband.

"Broadband is no longer a luxury, it's a necessity. You simply cannot find or keep a job today without mobile access to email, text and Internet service. Smaller, competitive companies have moved the Lifeline program into the future, currently serving 73 percent of all subscribers. But just as competition is helping the program enter a new, more efficient and advanced era, there the FCC goes again with a plan to favor monopoly providers.

"We think it's wrong. Ronald Reagan designed the Lifeline program to help the little guy. Small companies deserve the chance to continue moving Lifeline into a better broadband future."

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### **About INCOMPAS**

INCOMPAS, the internet and competitive networks association, is the leading trade association advocating for competition policy across all networks. INCOMPAS represents internet, streaming, communications and technology companies large and small, advocating for laws and policies that promote competition, innovation and economic development. Learn more at [www.incompas.org](http://www.incompas.org) or follow us on Twitter [@INCOMPAS](https://twitter.com/INCOMPAS).