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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

Washington, DC 20515-0102

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COMMITTEES:

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Julius Genachowski  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski,

I write regarding reported mismanagement of "Lifeline," a program administered by the Federal Communications Commission that subsidizes the purchase of landline or wireless telephone services for low-income consumers.

According to recent news reports, expenditures on the Lifeline program have nearly tripled in the last four years, increasing to \$2.2 billion in 2012 from \$819 million in 2008. This is apparently due to an extremely liberal eligibility policy that may, under certain circumstances, provide subsidized wireless service to an individual simply as a result of his or her participation in other federal welfare programs.

Additionally, a *Wall Street Journal* review of the program found that a potentially large number of individuals receiving wireless service might not be eligible to do so, even under the lax criteria for participation in the program. The *Wall Street Journal* further reported that the FCC failed to impose a verification process to ensure the eligibility of program participants until last year. In a time when federal spending of all types is under serious scrutiny, these reports are cause for serious concern.

Additional information is necessary in order to properly evaluate the efficacy of the Lifeline program. Specifically, I ask that you please provide the following information:

- The number of Lifeline beneficiaries that currently receive traditional landline service and the number of Lifeline beneficiaries that currently receive wireless service benefits, and a breakdown of the expenditures for each since 2008.
- The total number of Lifeline beneficiaries, and a breakdown thereof, that receive wireless service benefits directly as a result of their participation in the following federal programs: Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8), Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), National School Lunch Program's Free Lunch Program, Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TTANF), Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), and Head Start.
- A description of the FCC's current verification policies and an estimate of the share of program participants that have been reviewed and verified.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Your timely and detailed response is important, and I look forward to your reply on or before April 5, 2013.

Sincerely,

  
Martha Roby