

NEWS RELEASE

Office of Commissioner Brandon Presley
MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
NORTHERN DISTRICT

Presley: PSC Requests Federal Audit of AT&T's Internet Coverage Claims

Jackson, Mississippi (September 29, 2020)— Public Service Commissioner Brandon Presley announced today that in a letter to the Federal Communications Commission, the Mississippi Public Service Commission has requested a full compliance audit of AT&T Mississippi regarding information submitted to federal entities surrounding the telecom giant's claims of providing internet service to homes in Mississippi through the company's use of federal dollars in the FCC's Connect America Fund.

In recent weeks, Presley issued a subpoena to AT&T as part of a PSC investigation into the company's claims of providing internet service to 133,000 locations in Mississippi using federal aid from the Connect America Fund. Presley says the PSC has clear and convincing evidence that data submitted by the AT&T Mississippi to federal entities is invalid and that the company has factual knowledge that the information is incorrect.

"AT&T Mississippi has submitted information regarding internet service to Mississippians that was funded by the Connect America Fund that they know is false. Our investigation has revealed a wide-array of inconsistencies in what AT&T advertises as available and what actually exists when consumers try to get internet service. All the while, AT&T has submitted data saying that they have used federal funds to bring internet service to these specific homes," Presley said. "AT&T knows, for a fact, that information that they have provided regarding where their internet service exists is false. They know that through their own, internal records. It's imperative that the FCC and other appropriate federal agencies work with us to hold them accountable."

A copy of the PSC's letter to the Federal Communications Commission is attached.



for more information contact:

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Mississippi Public Service Commission



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September 29, 2020

Kris Monteith, Bureau Chief
Wireline Competition Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C.

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dear Ms. Monteith,

We are writing to request a complete compliance audit of AT&T Mississippi regarding their claims of providing service to over 133,000 locations in Mississippi as part of their obligation under the Connect America Fund II. As a part of our annual certification of Eligible Telecommunications Carriers, evidence has been uncovered by our agency that leads to great concern surrounding the validity of AT&T Mississippi's claims and the honesty of data submitted by them to the Universal Service Administrative Company's High Cost Universal Broadband ("USAC HUBB").

Our investigation has found concrete, specific examples that show AT&T Mississippi has reported location addresses to the USAC HUBB as being served when, in fact, the addresses are without service under their CAF-II obligations. AT&T Mississippi continues to have actual knowledge of these invalid submissions regarding their provision of service. This pattern of submitting false data to the USAC HUBB merits a full compliance audit by the FCC, USAC, or whichever appropriate agency. We feel it is our duty to alert you to this issue.

Our staff is more than willing to cooperate with any part of this investigation. While AT&T Mississippi filed the evidence in question under seal at our agency, we are happy to provide you with all documents, subpoenas, and data requests that we have propounded in this effort. Feel free to contact Ross Hammons at 601-961-5436 or by email at ross.hammons@psc.ms.gov if you need further information.

Handwritten signature of Dane Maxwell in black ink.

Handwritten signature of Brandon Presley in black ink.

Handwritten signature of Brent Bailey in black ink.

Chairman Dane Maxwell Commissioner Brandon Presley Commissioner Brent Bailey

Cc: Federal Communications Commission, Office of Inspector General
 Universal Service Administrative Company