

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Office of Commissioner Brandon Presley MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION NORTHERN DISTRICT

### **Presley Issues Investigative Subpoena to AT&T After Telecom Giant Refuses to Provide Regulators Information Related to \$283 Million in Internet Expansion Funding**

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI (September 10, 2020)- Public Service Commissioner Brandon Presley has signed an investigative subpoena for records from telecom giant AT&T regarding the company's acceptance of \$283,780,632 from the Connect America Fund to expand internet service in Mississippi. Presley's subpoena requests detailed information related to the company's claim to have made internet service available to 133,000 locations in the state. Specifically, the subpoena demands production of documents showing the number of actual subscribers to AT&T's fixed wireless service within the 133,000 locations where the company claims to have provided service, the number of complaints filed with the company by customers who have taken service and the number of Mississippians who applied for fixed wireless service based on AT&T's assertion that it was available and were later determined not to be in an area covered. Prior to issuing the investigative subpoena, Commissioner Presley informally asked AT&T for documentation related to the actual number of locations benefitting from the \$280 million project. AT&T refused to provide any of that information prompting the investigative subpoena. Furthermore, some items in today's subpoena were part of data requests filed by the Public Utilities Staff that went ignored by AT&T. The Mississippi Public Service Commission is currently reviewing AT&T and other carriers' prior and future utilization of the federal Connect America and Universal Service funds in accordance with state and federal law.

"AT&T has pocketed \$283,780,632 of public money with a promise to expand internet service, yet they refuse to answer the most basic questions of a regulator surrounding the use of these dollars and the actual success of their plans. With their claim that they have exceeded making service available to 133,000 locations, it is natural to ask these questions, especially in light of the lack of internet service during the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, AT&T refuses to answer. It is very clear to me that AT&T's position is to take as much public money as possible and answer as few questions from regulators as possible.", Commissioner Presley said. "AT&T entered into a contract with the public when they took the public's money and yet I still have constituents who were told by AT&T that their home was eligible for fixed wireless service only to find out later that they were misled by company materials and representatives. These are very basic questions that you and I would ask of anyone we gave our personal money to and AT&T should not be treated any different when they take government money."

To aid in the investigation, Presley asks any Mississippian who was promised fixed wireless internet service from AT&T, but did not receive it or had poor fixed wireless service to contact him at 1-800-637-7722 or by email at [northern.district@psc.ms.gov](mailto:northern.district@psc.ms.gov)



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