

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

This new information collection is being submitted as part of the *Connect America Fund et al*, WC Docket No. 10-90 *et al*, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 16-64, 31 FCC Rcd 5949, to obtain the Office of Management Budget (OMB) approval for new and revised information collection requirements as a result of recent Commission orders as explained below.

It also addresses the requirements for high-cost recipients to report location information where they have deployed facilities meeting their public interest obligations, as well as associated certifications and quarterly reports.

A. Justification:

1. *Circumstances that make the collection necessary.* The Communications Act of 1934, as amended requires the “preservation and advancement of universal service.” The information collection requirements reported under this new collection are the result of Commission actions to promote the Act’s universal service goals.

Pursuant to the *Rate of Return Order (Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90 *et al.*, Report and Order, Order and Order on Reconsideration, and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 31 FCC Rcd 3087 (2016) (*Rate-of-Return Order*), *Phase II Auction Order (Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 *et al.*, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 16-64) (*Phase II Auction Order*) and *Alaska Communications Systems Phase II Service Obligations Order (Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 *et al.*, Order, FCC 16-143) (*ACS Phase II Order*) this collection will consolidate into a single collection location reporting and related certification requirements for recipients of high cost support with information currently being collected from recipients of high cost support under OMB Control Nos. 3060-1200 and 3060-0986.

This information collection addresses the requirement that certain carriers with high cost reporting obligations must file information about their locations that meet their broadband deployment public interest obligations via an electronic portal (“portal”). The Commission required that the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) establish the portal so that carriers could file their location data in the portal by 2017.

The portal will have three key functions as explained below and in further detail in the attached template. It will permit recipients of high cost support to: (1) submit broadband location data on a rolling basis throughout the year; (2) certify their compliance with their build-out requirements based upon information filed in the portal; (3) file quarterly compliance reports in those cases they have not met their buildout requirements. The filing and certification requirements vary by carrier type (e.g., recipient of Phase II model-based support vs. a rural broadband experiment recipient). Because of these differences, the collections and burden hours associated with each carrier type also differ as described in detail below.

Proposal to Modify and Move Currently Approved Requirements to this Collection

This collection implements the *Rate of Return* order by moving and modifying the currently approved requirements under OMB Control Numbers 3060-1200 and 3060-0986 to enable recipients of Phase II support and rural broadband experiment funding to file their location information and associated reports and certifications in the portal instead of on the FCC Form 481 (“Form 481”) or with the Commission as is currently required.

On July 11, 2014, the Commission adopted *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 *et al.*, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 29 FCC Rcd 8769 (2014) to implement the rural broadband experiments. To monitor and gather data about the use of rural broadband experiment support, the Commission adopted several reporting requirements for recipients, including the requirement that they submit an annual report providing the locations to which the recipients had deployed networks capable of meeting the recipients' public interest obligations, and evidence supporting that deployment. Recipients were also required to file similar reports due three and five years after their authorization. These three and five year reports also collect certifications that the recipients of rural broadband funding have met their buildout milestones. The three and five year reporting requirements and milestone certification requirements were approved on September 21, 2015 under OMB Control Number 3060-1200. The annual location reporting requirements were approved on May 27, 2016 under OMB Control Number 3060-0986. This information is currently collected on FCC Form 481, due July 1 of each year.

On December 11, 2014, the Commission adopted *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 *et al.*, Report and Order, 29 FCC Rcd 15644 (2014) to implement reporting requirements for recipients of Connect America Phase II (Phase II) model-based support. To ensure that Phase II model-based support is being used for its intended purposes, the Commission required that recipients provide certain information in their Form 481 annual reports, including the locations to which the recipients had deployed networks capable of meeting the recipients' public interest obligations and certifications that they had met their build-out milestones. The Commission also adopted non-compliance measures for those recipients of Phase II model-based support which failed to meet their milestones. The information collection requirements associated with these rules were approved on May 27, 2016 under OMB Control Number 3060-0986. By July 1, 2016, recipients of Phase II model-based support filed their first location information on Form 481.

On March 28, 2016, the Commission adopted the *Rate of Return Order* and established significant reforms to place the universal service support program on solid footing for the next decade to preserve and advance voice and broadband service in areas served by rate-of-return carriers and modified existing requirements for recipients of Phase II support. Specifically, recipients of Phase II support would no longer be required to file location information and related certifications on the FCC Form 481. Instead, this information would be filed through an electronic portal created by USAC. The Commission directed USAC to ensure that the portal is ready to accept carrier submissions by 2017. Quarterly non-compliance reports would also now be filed via the portal.

Recipients of rural broadband experiment funding are obligated to comply with all relevant universal service rules, including reporting requirements that are or may be adopted in the future. See *Technology Transitions et al.*, GN Docket No. 13-5 *et al.*, Order *et al.*, 29 FCC Rcd 1433 (2014).

Therefore, pursuant to the *Rate of Return Order*, rural broadband experiment recipients are now obligated to submit location data, related evidence and build-out certifications that are part of the annual, three and five year reports to the portal as well. However, to ensure a smooth transition to the portal, recipients of rural broadband funding will continue to file this information on FCC Form 481, with the Commission and with USAC until February 28, 2018. Their obligation to file this information in the portal will not go into effect until their reports due in March 1, 2018 and thereafter.

Proposed New Requirements

In the *Rate of Return Order*, the Commission adopted specific public interest obligations that required all rate-of-return carriers to report on an annual basis, via an electronic portal established by USAC, locations to which the carriers had deployed networks capable of meeting their public interest obligations and certify that they had met their buildout milestones. The Commission stated that the non-compliance measures it previously adopted for ETCs electing Phase II model-based support would also apply to rate-of-return

carriers that elect to receive Alternative Connect America Cost Model (“CAF-ACAM”) support. For rate-of-return carriers electing to remain on legacy support mechanisms (Connect America Fund-Broadband Loop Support, (“CAF-BLS”)) that fail to meet their build-out obligations, the Commission noted it would determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether the existing non-compliance measures would apply to such carrier.

On May 26, 2016, the Commission adopted rules to implement a competitive bidding process for Phase II of the Connect America Fund. *See Phase II Auction Order*. These rules include the requirement for auction winners to build-out networks capable of meeting their public interest obligations and report, to an online portal, locations to which auction winners had deployed networks capable of meeting their public interest obligations. The Commission also adopted non-compliance measures for those auction winners that fail to meet their milestones for deploying facilities in compliance with their public interest obligations.

On October 31, 2016, the Commission adopted the *ACS Phase II Order* to establish public service obligations and implement reporting requirements for Alaska Communications Systems (ACS), a recipient of Phase II frozen support. To ensure Phase II frozen support is being used for its intended purposes, the Commission stated that the reporting, certification and non-compliance measures it previously adopted for ETCs electing Phase II model-based support would also apply to ACS. For the same reason, the Commission also adopted a cost certification requirement for certain locations.

Elimination of Currently Approved Requirements in OMB Control Numbers 3060-0986 and 3060-1200

Upon the approval of this information collection, the Commission proposes to eliminate those requirements currently approved under OMB Control Number 3060-0986 and OMB Control Number 3060-1200 related to location reporting, related certifications and reports for Phase II recipients of model-based support and rural broadband experiment recipients.

Description of Online Portal

We propose to collect the location and associated certifications and reports through an online portal as follows.

- Online Access for Streamlined Filing – Filers will submit the geolocation data through an online portal. The online portal will ask basic information about the filer (“carrier information data”) such as the carrier name at the study area level, study area code(s) and holding company name and carrier contact information and prepopulate these and other components of information already known about the applicant into the online form. These carrier information data may be auto-generated by applicants’ prior Form 481 filings as well as other information that has been previously stored in USAC’s systems. The carrier identified in the carrier information data will file geocoded location information for those locations that it has built to meet the Commission’s public interest obligations. Some location data, such as the latitude and longitude of each location, are identical to the information that was previously collected on Form 481 filed by recipients of Phase II model-based support and rural broadband experiment recipients. Other pieces of information, such as the speed available at the location, have not been collected on Form 481. Starting no later than January 1, 2017, carriers will have the opportunity to use a USAC verification system to validate their location information prior to the annual filing deadline (which is March 1, 2017 for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients, Rate-of-Return carriers, and ACS). The portal will provide error messages, as applicable, when the location data does not meet certain parameters, such as a message indicating that filed location is not within the eligible area for which the carrier is eligible to receive high cost support. Access to the portal and the ability to pre-file is expected to expedite the location filing and allow carriers to correct any errors in their data prior to the filing deadline. Once information is

filed into the portal, carriers will be able to check and provide corrections and updates to the information displayed. Carriers required to do so will file quarterly compliance reports in a similar manner as described above. Carriers will also be able to certify their compliance with their reporting obligations and buildout milestones on an annual basis through the portal.

- Customized Applications - In general, the portal will have built-in logic that adapts to the type of carrier. For example, if the carrier indicates it is a rate-of-return carrier during the filing process, the portal may provide information about the public interest requirements (e.g., speed and build-out requirements) particular to rate-of-return carriers.
- Integrated Instructions – Guidance for submitting the information will be integrated into the system to provide filers a roadmap for completion. Wherever applicable and possible, filers will be provided explanatory text regarding data submission choices and procedures, and additional text to remind them where they may have to provide additional information or meet special requirements.

Requirements proposed in this information collection:

(1) Geocoded Information for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients (moved and revised from 3060-0986)

Price cap carriers that elected to receive Phase II model-based support are required to deploy service meeting the Commission’s public interest obligations to a set number of locations in each state where they have accepted support by specific build-out milestones. The Commission required that such carriers submit geocoded location information so that the Commission can monitor these carriers’ progress in meeting such milestones. 47 C.F.R. § 54.316. Geocoded locations are necessary for the Commission to verify that carriers have in fact deployed to the number of locations claimed.

Currently, under the requirements in 3060-0986, Phase II recipients of model-based support must report the list of geocoded locations meeting the Commission’s public interest obligations by the end of the calendar year in the Form 481 due the following July. This collection moves this reporting requirement to the portal, changes the date of the filing requirement from July 1, to March 1 and modifies the specific information that needs to be collected for each location as described below.

For each location to be counted towards satisfaction of a Phase II Model-based support recipient deployment obligation, that carrier must provide, for each location or set of locations, the information noted below in the portal. In some cases, some or all of fields may be auto-generated by the portal based on information previously filed with USAC. See Portal Template for additional details.

- (a) The carrier’s name
- (b) Carrier holding company name
- (c) Contact information for the person who prepared and submitted the data
- (d) Study Area Code(s)
- (e) Type of Carrier (e.g., rate-of-return)
- (f) State(s) for which the carrier is making the filing
- (g) Location ID
- (h) Latitude of the location (to 6 decimal places)
- (i) Longitude of Location (to 6 decimal places)
- (j) Address of location
- (k) Number of units at the location
- (l) The bandwidth/speed available at the location

- (m) The date of service deployment at the location
- (n) Officer certification that information is true and correct
- (o) Certifying Official Contact Information

By March 1, 2017 and every year thereafter ending March 1, 2021, such carriers will be required to report the locations of newly deployed service meeting the Commission's public interest obligations in the prior calendar year. By March 1, 2021, Phase II recipients of model-based support will also be required to include the total number and geocodes of all the supported locations that they deployed service meeting the Commission's public interest obligations.

(2) Build-Out Certifications for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients (moved and revised from 3060-0986)

The Commission adopted build-out milestones for price cap carriers that receive Phase II model-based support and required such ETCs to certify their compliance with these milestones. 47 CFR. §§ 54.310(c), 54.316.

Currently, the collection in 3060-0986 requires Phase II recipients of model based support to certify that they have met their public interest obligations and their yearly build-out milestones the Form 481 due the following July.

This collection moves this reporting requirement to the portal, changes the date of the collection from July 1 to March 1, and modifies the specific information that needs to be collected for each location as described below.

By March 1, 2017, each recipient of Phase II support must provide a certification that the recipient offered broadband service meeting the requisite public interest requirements to the locations deployed in the state.

Each recipient of Phase II support must submit a certification to the portal by March 1, 2017 that by the end 2016, the recipient offered broadband meeting the requisite public interest requirements to locations reported in the state:

Each recipient of Phase II support must submit a certification to the portal that by the end of the prior calendar year, the recipient offered broadband meeting the requisite public interest requirements based on the following percentages in the state:

- (a) By March 1, 2018, certify to 40 percent.
- (b) By March 1, 2019, certify to 60 percent.
- (c) By March 1, 2020, certify to 80 percent.
- (d) By March 1, 2021, certify to 100 percent.

In addition, by March 1, 2018, recipients of Phase II model-based support must certify, at the holding company level, that by December 31, 2017, at least five percent of the nationwide total of locations meeting its public interest obligations previously lacked 4/1 Mbps service.

By requiring recipients of Phase II model-based support to submit these certifications, the Commission will be able to monitor such carriers' use of Phase II model-based support as they build out their networks to ensure that the support is being used for its intended purposes.

(3) Geocoded Information and Associated Certifications for Alaska Communications Systems (ACS) as a

Phase II Frozen Support Recipient (new requirement)

ACS elected to receive Phase II frozen support and is required to deploy service meeting the Commission's tailored public interest obligations to a set number of locations in Alaska by specific build-out milestones. The Commission required that ACS submit the same geocoded location information as it required for model-based support recipients so that the Commission can monitor ACS's progress in meeting its milestones. The Commission also required that ACS submit certification that the capital expenditure cost of build-out to any "low-cost" location was \$5,000 or more. Geocoded locations are necessary for the Commission to verify that ACS has in fact deployed to the number of locations claimed.

For each location to be counted towards satisfaction of a Phase II frozen support deployment obligation, ACS must provide, for each location or set of locations, the information noted below in the portal. In some cases, some or all of fields may be auto-generated by the portal based on information previously filed with USAC. See Portal Template for additional details.

- (a) The carrier's name
- (b) Carrier holding company name
- (c) Contact information for the person who prepared and submitted the data
- (d) Study Area Code(s)
- (e) Type of Carrier (e.g., rate-of-return)
- (f) State(s) for which the carrier is making the filing
- (g) Location ID
- (h) Whether the location is a substitute location in a partially-served or low-cost census block
- (i) Latitude of the location (to 6 decimal places)
- (j) Longitude of Location (to 6 decimal places)
- (k) Address of location
- (l) Number of units at the location
- (m) The bandwidth/speed available at the location
- (n) The date of service deployment at the location
- (o) Officer certification that the capital expenditure cost by ACS to build to any low-cost location was \$5,000 or more
- (p) Officer certification that information is true and correct
- (q) Certifying Official Contact Information

By March 1, 2017, ACS will be required to report the locations where it is providing service meeting its public interest obligations as of the end of 2016.

By March 1, 2018 and every year thereafter ending March 1, 2025, ACS will be required to report the locations of newly deployed service meeting the Commission's tailored public interest obligations in the prior calendar year. By March 1, 2025, ACS will also be required to include the total number and geocodes of all the supported locations that it deployed service meeting the Commission's tailored public interest obligations.

By October 1, 2018, ACS must complete initial planning and submit a list of geocoded locations in partially served census blocks that it proposes to serve. ACS must submit certification that it does not itself serve any of the proposed locations in such blocks at the time it submits its list.

The Commission adopted build-out milestones for ACS as a recipient of Phase II frozen support and required ACS to certify its compliance with these milestones.

ACS must submit a certification to the portal that by the end of the prior calendar year, the recipient offered broadband meeting the requisite public interest requirements based on the following percentages in Alaska:

- (a) By March 1, 2018, certify to 30 percent.
- (b) By March 1, 2019, certify to 40 percent.
- (c) By March 1, 2020, certify to 50 percent.
- (d) By March 1, 2021, certify to 60 percent.
- (e) By March 1, 2022, certify to 70 percent.
- (f) By March 1, 2023, certify to 80 percent.
- (g) By March 1, 2024, certify to 90 percent.
- (h) By March 1, 2025, certify to 100 percent.

In addition, ACS must certify that any deployment to a non-high-cost census block was, in fact, high cost. We require ACS to certify that the capital expenditure ACS incurred to build to each non-high-cost location within a qualifying “low-cost” census block was at least \$5,000 per location.

By requiring ACS to submit these certifications, the Commission will be able to monitor ACS’ use of Phase II frozen support as it builds out its networks to ensure that the support is being used for its intended purposes.

(4) Reporting Requirements and Associated Certifications for Rural Broadband Experiment Support Recipients (moved and revised from 3060-0986 and 3060-1200)

Recipients of rural broadband experiment support are required to deploy service meeting the Commission’s public interest obligations to a set number of locations by specific build-out milestones at the end of their third and fifth years following the authorization of support. The Commission also required that rural broadband experiment recipients submit geocoded location information on an annual basis and evidence supporting their build-out. These requirements permit the Commission to monitor rural broadband experiment recipients’ progress in meeting their deployment and provide evidence that the recipients are deploying service that meets the Commission’s public interest obligations. *See Rural Broadband Experiments Order.*

Currently, these reporting and certification requirements are filed pursuant to 3060-0986 and 3060-1200.

Under the requirements in 3060-0986, recipients of rural broadband experiment support must report the list of geocoded locations meeting the Commission’s public interest obligations along with supporting evidence on FCC Form 481. This collection moves these reporting requirement to the portal, changes the date of the annual filing requirement from July 1 to March 1 and modifies the specific information that needs to be collected for each location as described below.

Under the requirements in 3060-1200, recipients of rural broadband experiment support must report the list of geocoded locations meeting the Commission’s public interest obligations along with supporting evidence and milestone certifications on the third and fifth year anniversaries of their authorizations. This collection moves these reporting and certification requirements to the portal and modifies the specific information that needs to be collected for each location as described below.

While rural broadband experiment recipients are now obligated to submit the information to the portal, to ensure a smooth transition, recipients of rural broadband funding will continue to file this information on FCC Form 481 and with the Commission and USAC until February 28, 2018. Their obligation to file this information with the portal will not go into effect until their reports due in March 1 2018 and thereafter.

Starting on March 1 2018, rural broadband experiment recipients must report the following information to the portal, for each location or set of locations, by the deadline of the recipients' annual reports and the recipients' third and fifth year milestone deadlines. In some cases, some or all of fields may be auto-generated by the portal based on information previously filed with USAC. See Portal Template for additional details.

- (a) The carrier's name
- (b) Carrier holding company name
- (c) Contact information for the person who prepared and submitted the data
- (d) Study Area Code(s)
- (e) Type of Carrier (e.g., rate-of-return)
- (f) State(s) for which the carrier is making the filing
- (g) Location ID
- (h) Latitude of the location (to 6 decimal places)
- (i) Longitude of Location (to 6 decimal places)
- (j) Address of location
- (k) Number of units at the location
- (l) The bandwidth/speed available at the location
- (m) The date of service deployment at the location
- (n) Officer certification that information is true and correct
- (o) Certifying Official Contact Information

Rural broadband experiment recipients must also submit to the portal, at the time of their annual reports, and their third and fifth year milestone deadlines, evidence demonstrating that the recipient is meeting the relevant public service obligations for the identified locations. This evidence must at least detail the pricing, offered broadband speed and data usage allowances available in the relevant geographic area. Parties submitting this information should take steps to ensure that sensitive information is not improperly submitted. Examples of such information are customer proprietary network information (47 U.S.C. § 222; 47 C.F.R. §§ 64.2001-64.2011), records covered by the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (18 U.S.C. § 2702(a)(3), (c)), or records otherwise protected by law for purposes of customer privacy (*see, e.g.*, 47 U.S.C. § 551).

In addition, at their build-out milestones following the end of their third year of support, rural broadband experiment support recipients must submit via the portal a certification that they offer service to at least 85 percent of their required number of locations with the required level of service and, by the end of their fifth year of support, that they offer service to 100 percent of their required number of locations with the required level of service.

The other filing requirements under OMB Control Nos. 3060-1200 and 3060-0986 for rural broadband recipients that are not described above will continue to be collected under those control numbers.

(5) Geocoded Information for Rate-of-Return Support Recipients (new requirement)

Rate-of-Return carriers are required to deploy service meeting the Commission's public interest obligations to a set number of locations in each state where they have accepted support by specific build-out milestones. The Commission required that rate-of-return carriers submit geocoded location information so that the

Commission can monitor rate-of-return carriers' progress in meeting such milestones. 47 C.F.R. § 54.316. Geocoded locations are necessary for the Commission to verify that carriers have in fact deployed to the number of locations claimed.

Rate-of-return recipients must report the following information to the portal for each location or set of locations. In some cases, some or all of the fields below may be auto-generated by the portal based on information previously filed with USAC. See Portal Template for additional details.

- (a) The carrier's name
- (b) Carrier holding company name
- (c) Contact information for the person who prepared and submitted the data
- (d) Study Area Code(s)
- (e) Type of Carrier (e.g., rate-of-return)
- (f) State(s) for which the carrier is making the filing
- (g) Location ID
- (h) Latitude of the location (to 6 decimal places)
- (i) Longitude of Location (to 6 decimal places)
- (j) Address of location
- (k) Number of units at the location
- (l) The bandwidth/speed available at the location
- (m) The date of service deployment at the location
- (n) Officer certification that information is true and correct
- (o) Certifying Official Contact Information

By March 1, 2017, rate-of-return carriers will be required to report the list of geocoded locations built that meet the Commission's public interest obligations. Rate of return carriers electing ACAM must report locations built in the prior calendar year. Rate of Return carriers remaining on CAF-BLS support must report locations built since the effective date of the *Rate of Return Order*.

By March 1 of every subsequent year, rate-of-return carriers must report the list of geocoded locations built in the prior calendar year that meet the Commission's public interest obligations. In addition, those rate-of-return carriers electing CAF-ACAM support must, by March 1, 2019, report the list of geocoded locations built prior to 2016 that meet the Commission's public interest obligations.

(6) Build-Out Certifications for Rate-of-Return Carriers Electing CAF-ACAM Support (new requirement)

The Commission adopted build-out milestones for rate-of-return carriers that elect CAF-ACAM support and required such ETCs to certify their compliance with these milestones. 47 C.F.R. §54.311 and 47 C.F.R. §54.316. Specifically, for each state where a carrier has elected to receive CAF-ACAM support, it must provide to the portal, a certification that by the end of the prior calendar year, the recipient offered broadband meeting the requisite public interest requirements to a percentage of supported locations in the state as follows:

- (a) By March 1, 2021, certify to 40 percent.
- (b) By March 1, 2022, certify to 50 percent.
- (c) By March 1, 2023, certify to 60 percent.
- (d) By March 1, 2024, certify to 70 percent.
- (e) By March 1, 2025, certify to 80 percent.
- (f) By March 1, 2026, certify to 90 percent.
- (g) By March 1, 2027, certify to 100 percent.

By requiring rate-of-return carriers electing CAF-ACAM support to submit these certifications, the Commission will be able to monitor price cap carriers' use of CAF-ACAM support as they build out their networks to ensure that the support is being used for its intended purposes.

(7) Build-Out Certifications for Rate-of-Return Carriers electing CAF-BLS Support (new requirement)

The Commission adopted build-out milestones for rate-of-return carriers that remain on legacy support (CAF-BLS) and required such ETCs to certify their compliance with these milestones. 47 C.F.R. § 54.308 and 47 C.F.R. § 54.316. Specifically, for each study area where each carrier is receiving CAF-BLS support, it must provide to the portal:

By March 1, 2022 and March 1, 2027, a certification that the recipient offered broadband meeting the requisite public interest obligations to the required percentage of locations by the end of the prior year.

By requiring rate-of-return carriers receiving CAF-BLS support to submit these certifications, the Commission will be able to monitor carriers' use of CAF-BLS support as they build out their networks to ensure that the support is being used for its intended purposes.

(8) Geocoded Information for Phase II Auction Winners (new requirement)

Phase II Auction winners are required to deploy service meeting the Commission's public interest obligations to a set number of locations in each area by specific buildout milestones. The Commission required that such carriers submit geocoded location information so that the Commission can monitor those carriers' progress in meeting their deployment milestones. 47 C.F.R. § 54.316. Geocoded locations are necessary for the Commission to verify that carriers have in fact deployed to the number of locations claimed.

Phase II Auction winners must report the following information to the portal for each location or set of locations. In some cases, some or all of the fields below may be auto-generated by the portal based on information previously filed with USAC. See Portal Template for additional details.

- (a) The carrier's name
- (b) Carrier holding company name
- (c) Contact information for the person who prepared and submitted the data
- (d) Study Area Code(s)
- (e) Type of Carrier (e.g., rate-of-return)
- (f) State(s) for which the carrier is making the filing
- (g) Location ID
- (h) Latitude of the location (to 6 decimal places)
- (i) Longitude of Location (to 6 decimal places)
- (j) Address of location
- (k) Number of units at the location
- (l) The bandwidth/speed available at the location
- (m) The date of service deployment at the location
- (n) Officer certification that information is true and correct
- (o) Certifying Official Contact Information

In addition, Phase II auction winners must also submit to the portal, for each location, the technology used (e.g., fiber, copper) to provide the service.

The first location list will be due by the last business day of the second calendar month following the one-year anniversary of support authorization and must reflect the number and list of geocoded locations (if any) where the recipient already was offering service meeting the Commission's requirements and all new locations (if any) where the recipient was offering service meeting the requisite requirements by the end of the first year. For the following five years, by the last business day of the second calendar month following the anniversary of support authorization, auction winners must file a list of geocoded locations newly served during the prior year.

(9) Build-Out Certifications for Phase II Auction Winners. (new requirement)

The Commission adopted build-out milestones for Phase II auction winners and required such ETCs to certify their compliance their buildout milestones. 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.310(c), 54.316. For each state where such ETCs are providing service, the ETCs must submit to the portal, by the last business day of the second calendar month following each service milestone specified by the Commission, a certification that they are offering broadband meeting the requisite public interest obligations to the required percentage of their supported locations in the state. Specifically, Phase II auction winners must provide to the portal:

- (a) By the last business day of the second calendar month following the third year of support, a certification that, by the end of third year of support, the carrier completed deployment to 40 percent of the supported locations.
- (b) By the last business day of the second calendar month following the fourth year of support, a certification that the carrier completed deployment to 60 percent of the supported locations.
- (c) By the last business day of the second calendar month following the fifth year of support, a certification that the carrier completed deployment to 80 percent of the supported locations.
- (d) By the last business day of the second calendar month following the sixth year of support, a certification that the carrier was offering broadband meeting the requisite public interest obligations to 100 percent of supported locations in a state.

By requiring Phase II auction winners to submit these certifications, the Commission will be able to monitor such carriers' use of support as they build out their networks to ensure that the support is being used for its intended purposes.

(10) Non-Compliance Reporting for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients, ACS as recipient of Phase II Frozen Support, Phase II Auction Winners and Rate of Return Carriers (moved and revised from 3060-0986)

Phase II Model-Based Support recipients, ACS as recipient of Phase II Frozen Support, Phase II Auction Winners and certain Rate of Return carriers that do not meet their build-out milestones by a certain specified percentage of locations may be required to submit quarterly reports that identify the geocoded locations to which the ETC has newly deployed facilities capable of delivering broadband meeting the requisite requirements with Connect America support the previous quarter. 47 C.F.R. § 54.320(d). Such a requirement will be triggered for such carriers other than rate of return carriers receiving CAF-BLS support if the ETC has a compliance gap of at least five percent (and in some cases less if the compliance gap has occurred for multiple years). These quarterly reports must be filed once the Bureau issues a letter stating that the ETC has reduced its compliance gap to less than five percent.

The Commission has determined that if such recipients miss their build-out milestones by a certain percentage, they require additional monitoring to ensure that High Cost support is being used for its

intended purposes. These quarterly reports will enable the Commission to monitor recipients' progress in meeting build-out milestones more closely and verify that service is actually being deployed to the reported locations.

Non-Compliance requirements for CAF-BLS recipients will be determined on a case-by-case basis and are therefore not included in the burden estimates below. This requirement is currently approved pursuant to 3060-0986.

This collection moves this reporting requirement to the portal and modifies the specific information that needs to be collected for each location. The content of the non-compliance reports carriers file with the portal will be substantially similar to the content of the geocoded location reporting for each respective carrier type, except that the ETC must indicate when submitting the report that it is a non-compliance report and not geocoded location report.

Statutory authority for this information collection is contained in 47 U.S.C. sections 151-154, 155, 201-206, 214, 218-220, 251, 252, 254, 256, 303(r), 332, 403, 405, 410, and 1302.

This information collection does not affect individuals or households; thus, there are no impacts under the Privacy Act

2. *Use of information.* The Commission will use the information collections to ensure that Connect America funds are spent in accordance with the rules of the program, and to determine whether and to what extent each carrier receiving high-cost support is meeting its broadband deployment obligations.
3. *Technology collection techniques.* The Commission plans to implement the requirements of this information collection through an online interface on the USAC web site. The online portal interface will differ in non-material respects from the template provided with this submission. The online portal will permit applicants to be able to input data in required fields and have data auto-populated where applicable. To reduce carrier confusion, the electronic filing process will utilize progressive disclosure where possible, so that a carrier will be asked to provide only information relevant to its application (e.g., rate-of-return carriers will not be asked to provide information that would only be applicable to price cap carriers). The interface is being designed to provide online storage of applications and related materials for carriers, with the potential to ease compliance with recordkeeping requirements and possible audits. Furthermore, the system is being implemented so that where possible, information already provided by carriers can be carried forward to filings in later funding years (i.e. pre-populated data), in order to further reduce the filing burden.
4. *Efforts to identify duplication.* Some of the data currently collected from Phase II model-based support recipients and rural broadband experiment recipients are under OMB Control Number 3060-0986 and OMB Control Number 3060-1200 which are being moved into this collection. The Commission anticipates revising the burden hours associated with those collections to reflect the move of those requirements into this collection.
5. *Impact on small entities.* The collection of information may affect small entities as well as large entities. The process has been designed to limit the burden as much as possible on small entities. Filing guidance and training will be made available to assist small entities in understanding what type of information should be submitted and in what format.
6. *Consequences if information is not collected.* The information collected is used to determine compliance with the rules and eligibility for high-cost universal service support. These requirements were put in place, in part, as a response to Government Accountability Office recommendations to increase the transparency and accountability of high cost program funding. Without the requested information, USAC will not be able

to determine whether a carrier is entitled to all of the support which it seeks or is complying with its service obligations. Failure to file the necessary location information may result in partial or complete denial of high-cost universal service support for the carrier.

7. *Special circumstances.* We do not foresee any special circumstances with this information collection.
8. *Federal Register notice; efforts to consult with persons outside the Commission.* A 60-day notice was published in the *Federal Register* pursuant to 5 C.F.R. § 1320.8(d) on October 25, 2016 (81 FR 73400). We received one comment in response to this notice. See Paperwork Reduction Act Comments of NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association (NTCA), OMB Control No. 3060-xxxx (filed Dec. 27, 2016). The commenter argues that the guidance the Wireline Competition Bureau provided to carriers in a December 8, 2016 Public Notice (DA 16-1363) regarding carriers' HUBB reporting obligations may create additional burdens on carriers unless additional guidance is provided. The Bureau's public notice did not alter any carrier's burden under section 54.316, adopted in the *Rate-of-Return Reform Order*, to report the eligible locations to which a carrier has made broadband available. The Bureau and USAC will continue to provide guidance to carriers regarding their HUBB reporting obligations as carriers begin to file data in the HUBB in 2017.

A 30-day notice was published in the *Federal Register* pursuant to 5 C.F.R. § 1320.8(d) on December 30, 2016 (81 FR 96453). NCTA also filed comments in response to this notice. See Paperwork Reduction Act Comments of NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association, OMB Control No. 3060-xxxx (filed January 30, 2017). NTCA argues that the Commission incorrectly calculated the burden for rate-of-return carriers to collect and submit information regarding locations to which they have made broadband service available. This is the first instance in which NTCA raised this argument with the Commission. Nevertheless, we have considered NCTA's argument and do not believe our projected burden calculation requires adjustment, especially since NTCA did not provide any alternative burden estimates. The projected burden for rate-of-return carriers subject to the location requirement in this collection is the same as the burden for nearly identical requirements in an approved collection. See OMB Control No. 3060-0986, ICR Reference No. 201608-3060-006, Supporting Statement at 22 (estimating that carriers receiving Phase II support will take 30 hours per year to collect and submit broadband location information and capital operating expense information). Also, carriers have flexibility regarding how they collect the data; and some of these approaches have a comparatively low burden. Further, as explained in this supporting statement, the majority of carriers subject to the requirement have to collect and submit information only for new locations. As NTCA indicates, such carriers will have a lower burden because they can collect the necessary information at the time the carrier is making the service available at that location.

NTCA also argues that the Commission's interpretation, in a December 8, 2016 Public Notice, of the definition of a "location" subject to the collection is too narrow. NTCA raised similar arguments in a January 9, 2017 Application for Review in FCC docket WC 10-90 and in its comments in response to the 60-day notice. As explained above, the Bureau's public notice did not alter any carrier's burden to report locations to which a carrier has made broadband available. Further, the Bureau and USAC will continue to provide guidance to carriers regarding their reporting obligations.

9. *Payments or gifts to respondents.* The Commission does not anticipate providing any payment or gifts to respondents.
10. *Assurances of confidentiality.* The Commission is not requesting respondents to submit confidential information to the Commission. We note that USAC must preserve the confidentiality of all data obtained from respondents and contributors to the universal service support program mechanism; must not use the data except for purposes of administering the universal service support program; and must not disclose data in company-specific form unless directed to do so by the Commission. Also, respondents may request

materials or information submitted to the Commission or to the Administrator believed confidential to be withheld from public inspection under 47 C.F.R. § 0.459 of the FCC's rules.

11. *Questions of a sensitive nature.* There are no questions of a sensitive nature with respect to the information collection requirements described herein.
12. *Estimates of the hour burden of the collection to respondents.* The following represents the hour burden on the collections of information:

a. Geocoded Information for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients (moved and revised from 3060-0986)

- (1) Number of respondents: Approximately 9. Only price cap carriers that elect to receive Phase II model-based support must report this data.
- (2) Frequency of response: Annually. Each recipient of Phase II model-based support must file the reports annually after accepting support.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 30 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden per respondent: 30 hours.

30 hours per respondent for 9 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

9 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 9 responses x 30 hours = **270 total annual hours.**

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$10,800. (270 hours x \$40/hr.).
- (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each Phase II model-based support recipient will take 30 hours to gather and submit the geocoded locations information.

(9 number of responses) x 30 (hours to prepare report) x \$40/hr. = \$10,800.

b. Reporting Requirements and Associated Certifications for Rural Broadband Experiment Support (moved and revised from 3060-0986 and 3060-1200)

- (1) Number of respondents: Approximately 16. Only recipients of rural broadband experiment support must report this data.
- (2) Frequency of response: Annually and occasionally. Each rural broadband experiment recipient must file the data every year following the authorization of support as well as at their 3 and 5 year build out milestones. Reporting will continue until the end of the recipient's project. The average number of certifications the provisionally selected winning bidders will submit each reporting period is two.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 2.

(4) Estimated time per response: 30 hours

(5) Total annual hour burden per respondent: 60 hours.

30 hours per respondent for 16 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

16 respondents x 2 reports per respondent = 32 responses x 30 hours = **960 total annual hours.**

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$38,400. (960 hours x \$40/hr.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each rural broadband experiment support recipient will take 30 hours to gather and submit the location data and required certifications:

32 (number of responses) x 30 (hours to prepare report) x \$40/hr. = \$38,400

c. Geocoded Information and Associated Certifications for Alaska Communications Systems (ACS) as a Phase II Frozen Support Recipient (new requirement)

(1) Number of respondents: 1. These requirements only apply to ACS.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually. ACS must file the reports annually after accepting support.

(3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.

(4) Estimated time per response: 41 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden per respondent: 41 hours.

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$1,640. (41 hours x \$40/hr.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that it will take ACS 41 hours to gather and submit the geocoded locations information and make the required certifications.

1 (number of responses) x 41 (hours to prepare certifications) x \$40/hr. = \$1,640

d. Geocoded Information for Rate-of-return Carriers (new requirement)

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 1,000.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually.

(3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.

(4) Estimated time per response: 30 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden per respondent: 30 hours.

30 hours per respondent for 1,000 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

1,000 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 1,000 responses x 30 hours = **30,000 total annual hours.**

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$1,200,000. (30,000 hours x \$40/hr.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each rate-of-return support recipient will take 30 hours to gather and submit the geocoded location information.

1,000 (number of responses) x 30 (hours to prepare report) x \$40/hr. = \$1,200,000.

e. Geocoded Information for Phase II Auction Winners (new requirement)

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 500.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually.

(3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.

(4) Estimated time per response: 30 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden per respondent: 30 hours.

30 hours per respondent for 500 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

500 responses x 1 report per respondent = 500 responses x 30 hours = **15,000 total annual hours.**

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$600,000 (15,000 hours x \$40/hr.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each rate-of-return support recipient will take 30 hours to gather and submit the geocoded locations information.

500 (number of responses) x 30 (hours to prepare report) x \$40/hr. = \$600,000.

f. Non-Compliance Reports for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients, ACS as recipient of Phase II Frozen Support, Phase II Auction Winners and Rate of Return Recipients (moved and revised from 3060-0986)

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 136. Only carriers that do not meet build-out milestones by a certain percentage will be required to file these reports.

(2) Frequency of response: Quarterly. Carriers that have failed to meet their build-out milestones by a certain percentage will be required to file quarterly reports.

(3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 4.

(4) Estimated time per response: 8 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden per respondent: 32 hours.

8 hours per respondent for 136 carriers filing on a quarterly basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

136 respondents x 4 reports per respondent = 544 responses x 8 hours = **4,352 total annual hours.**

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$174,080 (4,352 hours x \$40/hour).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each carrier that has failed to meet its build-out milestones will take 8 hours to collect and report location data for each quarter.

544 (number of responses) x 8 (hours to prepare report) x \$40/hr. = \$174,080.

g. Build-Out Certifications for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients (moved and revised from 3060-0986)

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 9. Only price cap carriers that elect to receive Phase II model-based support must make this certification.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually. Carriers accepting Phase II model-based support will be required to file this certification annually starting in their reports due in 2018.

(3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.

(4) Estimated time per response: 10 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden per respondent: 10 hours.

10 hours per respondent for 9 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

9 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 9 responses x 10 hours = **90 total annual hours.**

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$3,600 (90 hours x \$40/hour).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each recipient of Phase II Model-based support will take 8 hours to certify their compliance with their build-out requirements.

9 (number of responses) x 10 (hours to prepare report) x \$40/hr. = \$3,600.

h. Build-Out Certifications for Rate-of-Return Carriers electing CAF-ACAM Support (new requirement)

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 274. Estimated that out of approximately 1000 rate-of-return carriers, 274 will elect CAF-ACAM support.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually. Carriers electing will be required to file this certification annually starting in 2021.

(3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.

(4) Estimated time per response: 10 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden per respondent: 10 hours.

10 hours per respondent for 274 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

274 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 274 responses x 10 hours = **2,740 total annual hours.**

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$109,600. (2740 hours x \$40/hour).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each recipient CAF-ACAM support will take 8 hours to certify their compliance with their build-out requirements.

274 (number of responses) x 10 (hours to prepare report) x \$40/hr. = \$109,600.

i. Build-Out Certifications for Rate-of-return Carriers Receiving CAF-BLS Support (new requirement)

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 726. Estimated that out of the approximately 1000 rate-of-return carriers, 726 will not elect CAF-ACAM support and will remain on CAF-BLS support.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually. Carriers on CAF-BLS support will be required to file this certification every five years starting in 2022.

(3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.

(4) Estimated time per response: 10 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden per respondent: 10 hours.

10 hours per respondent for 726 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

726 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 726 responses x 10 hours = **7,260 total annual hours.**

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$290,400. (7,260 hours x \$40/hour).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each recipient CAF-BLS support will take 8 hours to certify their compliance with their build-out requirements.

726 (number of responses) x 10 (hours to prepare report) x \$40/hr. = \$290,400.

j. Build-Out Certifications for Phase II Auction Winners (new requirement)

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 500.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually. Phase II Auction Winners will be required to file this certification annually starting the last business day of the second calendar month following the third year of support.

(3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.

(4) Estimated time per response: 10 hours

(5) Total annual hour burden per respondent: 10 hours.

10 hours per respondent for 500 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

500 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 500 responses x 10 hours = **5,000 total annual hours**.

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$200,000 (5000 hours x \$40/hour).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each Phase II Auction winner will take 8 hours to certify their compliance with their build-out requirements.

500 (number of responses) x 10 (hours to prepare report) x \$40/hr. = \$200,000

The estimated respondents and responses and burden hours are listed below:

Information Collection Requirements	Number of Respondents	Number of Responses Per Year	Estimated Time per Response (hours)	Total Burden Hours	In-house Cost to Respondents
<u>a. Geocoded Information for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients</u>	9	9	30	270	\$10,800
<u>b. Reporting Requirements and Associated Certifications for Rural Broadband Experiment Support</u>	16	32	30	960	\$38,400
<u>c. Geocoded Information and Associated Certifications for ACS as Phase II Frozen Support Recipient</u>	1	1	41	41	1,640
<u>d. Geocoded Information for Rate-of-return Carriers</u>	1,000	1,000	30	30,000	\$1,200,000

<u>e. Geocoded Information for Phase II Auction Winners</u>	500	500	30	15,000	\$600,000
<u>f. Non-Compliance Reports for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients, Phase II Auction Winners and Rate of Return Recipients</u>	136	544	8	4,352	\$174,080
<u>g. Build-Out Certifications for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients</u>	9	9	10	90	\$3,600
<u>h. Build-Out Certifications for Rate-of-Return Carriers electing CAF-ACAM Support</u>	274	274	10	2,740	\$109,600
<u>i. Build-Out Certifications for Rate-of-return Carriers Receiving CAF-BLS Support</u>	726	726	10	7,260	\$290,400
<u>j. Build-Out Certifications for Phase II Auction Winners</u>	500	500	10	5,000	\$200,000

Total Number of Respondents: 1,526 unique respondents filing multiple times.

Total Number of Responses Annually: 3,595

Total Annual Hourly Burden for requirements (a) – (l): 65,713

Total Annual In-house Costs to respondents: \$2,628,520

13. *Estimates for the cost burden of the collection to respondents.* There are no outside contracting costs for this information collection. See the last column in the chart in item 12 above for the estimated in-house costs.
14. *Estimates of the cost burden to the Commission.* There will be few, if any, costs to the Commission because ensuring proper use of universal service support is already part of Commission duties. Furthermore, no new systems or programs will be acquired or developed to process the information collection.

15. *Program changes or adjustments.* This is a new information collection resulting in a program change/increase to the total respondents of 1,526, total annual responses of 3,595 and total annual burden hours of 65,713 to carry out the programs set forth in the *Rate-of-Return Order* and the *Phase II Auction Order*.
16. *Collections of information whose results will be published.* The Commission plans to make a subset of the information filed by carriers publicly available.
17. *Display of expiration date for OMB approval of information collection.* There is no form associated with this information collection. The Commission publishes a list of all OMB-approved information collections in 47 C.F.R. § 0.408 of the Commission's rules.
18. *Exceptions to certification statement for Paperwork Reduction Act submissions.* The Commission notes the following changes to the estimates since the 60 Day Notice was published in the Federal Register on October 25, 2016 (81 FR 73400):

The total number of respondents are 1,526, the total annual responses are 3,595 and the total annual burden hours are 65,713.

These estimates were reflected in the 30 Day Notice and included in this submission to OMB.

There are no other exceptions to the certification statement.

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods:

The Commission does not anticipate that the collection of information will employ statistical methods.