

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

This collection is being submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to seek approval for revised information collection requirements as a result of recent Commission orders as explained below. This collection updates FCC Form 481 and its instructions, as well as the projected burdens associated with other forms necessary for carriers to receive high-cost universal service support under the Connect America Fund.

**A. Justification:**

1. *Circumstances that make the collection necessary.*

The requirements in this information collection are used to determine the amount of, and eligibility for, high-cost universal service support received by incumbent and competitive eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) under the Connect America Fund.

The Communications Act of 1934, as amended (the Act) requires the “preservation and advancement of universal service.” The information collection requirements reported under this control number are the result of various Commission actions to promote the Act’s universal service goals, while minimizing waste, fraud, and abuse.

On November 18, 2011, the Commission adopted an order reforming its high-cost universal service support mechanisms. *Connect America Fund; A National Broadband Plan for Our Future; Establish Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers; High-Cost Universal Service Support; Developing a Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime; Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service; Lifeline and Link-Up; Universal Service Reform – Mobility Fund*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 07-135, 05-337, 03-109; GN Docket No. 09-51; CC Docket Nos. 01-92, 96-45; WT Docket No. 10-208, Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 26 FCC Rcd 17663 (2011) (*USF/ICC Transformation Order*), and the Commission and Wireline Competition Bureau have since adopted a number of orders that implement the *USF/ICC Transformation Order*; see also *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Third Order on Reconsideration, 27 FCC Rcd 5622 (2012); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Order, 27 FCC Rcd 605 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2012); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Fifth Order on Reconsideration, 27 FCC Rcd 14549 (2012); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Order, 28 FCC Rcd 2051 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Order, 28 FCC Rcd 7227 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90, Report and Order, 28 FCC Rcd 7766 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90, Report and Order, 28 FCC Rcd 7211 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket

No. 10-90, Report and Order, 28 FCC Rcd 10488 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Report and Order, Order and Order on Reconsideration and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 31 FCC Rcd 3087 (2016). The Commission has received OMB approval for most of the information collections required by these orders. At a later date, the Commission plans to submit additional revisions for OMB review to address other reforms adopted in the orders (e.g., 47 C.F.R. 54.313(a)(6)).

More recently, on August 23, 2016, the Commission adopted the *Alaska Plan Order*. See *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 16-271; WT Docket No. 10-208, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 31 FCC Rcd 10139 (2016) (*Alaska Plan Order*). In that order, the Commission adopted a plan for providing Alaskan rate-of-return carriers and competitive ETCs the option to obtain a fixed level of funding for a defined term in exchange for committing to deployment obligations that are tailored to each Alaskan carrier's circumstances. ETCs receiving support pursuant to the Alaska Plan must comply with the Commission's existing high-cost reporting and oversight mechanisms, with certain exceptions and modifications.

On July 7, 2017, the Commission adopted the *ETC Reporting Streamlining Order*. See *Connect America Fund; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 14-58, Report and Order, 32 FCC Rcd 5944 (2017) (*ETC Reporting Streamlining Order*). In that order, the Commission streamlined the annual reporting requirements for ETCs by eliminating rules duplicative of other reporting requirements or that are no longer necessary.

Further, since the previous filing deadline associated with this collection, changing circumstances have made filing certain information no longer necessary or required under the rules. For instance, the final Connect America Phase I incremental support deployment deadlines were in early 2017, so there are no longer any reporting obligations associated with that support. Moreover, because the Connect America Phase II challenge process has ended, we propose to remove Form 505 from this collection.

We therefore propose to revise this information collection, as well as Form 481 and its accompanying instructions, to reflect these new or modified requirements. We also propose a number of non-substantive changes to the Form 481 and accompanying instructions. Any increased burdens for particular reporting requirements are associated with ETCs newly subject to those requirements as a condition of receiving high-cost support.

***New requirements for which we are seeking OMB approval:***

- (1) Newly Available Backhaul Reporting for Alaska Plan Participants (See 12.a): To help the Commission monitor the availability of infrastructure for Alaska Plan participants, rate-of-return carriers and competitive ETCs participating in the Alaska Plan must certify in their FCC Form 481 whether any terrestrial backhaul or other satellite backhaul became commercially available in the previous calendar year in areas that previously were served exclusively by satellite backhaul, if the funding recipient identified in its approved performance plans that it exclusively relied on satellite backhaul for a certain portion of the population in its service area. To the extent that new terrestrial backhaul

facilities are constructed or other satellite backhaul become commercially available, the funding recipient must provide a description of the backhaul technology; and provide the date on which that backhaul was made commercially available to the carrier. Rate-of-return carriers participating in the Alaska Plan must provide the number of locations within their service area that are served by the newly available backhaul option. Competitive ETCs participating in the Alaska Plan must instead provide the number of the population within their service area that is served by the newly available backhaul option. 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.313(f)(3), 54.313(l).

Separate from Alaska Plan participants' FCC Form 481 reporting, within 12 months of backhaul facilities becoming commercially available to those locations served by the new backhaul reported pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(f)(3), rate-of-return carriers must certify that they are offering broadband service with latency suitable for real-time applications, including Voice over Internet Protocol, and usage capacity that is reasonably comparable to comparable offerings in urban areas. Competitive ETCs must, to the extent the funding recipient has not already committed to providing 4G LTE at 10/1 Mbps to the population served by the newly available backhaul by the end of the plan term, submit a revised performance commitment factoring in the availability of the new backhaul option no later than the due date of the Form 481 in which they have certified that such backhaul became commercially available. 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.313(f)(3), 54.313(l).

- (2) Capital Expenditure Documentation for Rate-of-Return and Competitive ETC Alaska Plan Participants (See 12.b): Alaska Plan rate-of-return participants that propose to maintain their existing networks throughout the 10-year support term without newly deploying or upgrading service to locations within their service area and all Alaska Plan competitive ETC participants are required to retain documentation on how much of their Alaska Plan support was spent on capital expenses and operating expenses and be prepared to produce such documentation upon request. We do not expect that this requirement will unduly burden recipients because they track their capital and operating expenditures in the regular course of business.
- (3) Reporting of New Locations by Connect America Fund-Broadband Loop Support (CAF-BLS) Recipients (See 12.c): Rate-of-return carriers participating in the CAF-BLS program, with 80 percent or greater deployment of 10/1 Mbps broadband service in their entire study areas, based on June 2015 FCC Form 477 data, must report progress on the number of locations where 10/1 Mbps or better broadband service has been deployed within their study area in the prior calendar year. This information is required as part of FCC Form 481. Such rate-of-return carriers also have the option of estimating the percentage of deployment across their entire study area (i.e., the approximate number of residential and small business locations to which the rate-of-return carrier has deployed, divided by the total approximate number of residential and small business locations in the study area).

***Currently approved requirements that are being modified:***

- (4) Connect America Fund Phase II Requirements, Rate-of-Return Carrier Requirements. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(1), (e)(1), and (f)(1) (See 12.d & 12.e):

Price cap carriers and rate-of-return carriers must report the number, names, and addresses of community anchor institutions to which they newly began providing access to broadband service in the preceding calendar year in the required template associated with FCC Form 481. To the extent applicable, rate-of-return carriers additionally must certify they are offering broadband meeting the Commission's requirements upon reasonable request. Rate-of-return carriers participating in the Alaska Plan must instead certify that they are offering broadband service consistent with their approved performance plans. This information collection now reflects modifications to the rate-of-return carrier requirements relevant to Alaska Plan participants.

(5) Reasonably Comparable Rate Certification for Broadband for High-Cost Recipients (See 12.f):

The Commission requires high-cost recipients to certify in their FCC Form 481 reports that the pricing of a service that meets the Commission's broadband public interest obligations is no more than the applicable benchmark to be announced annually in a public notice issued by the Wireline Competition Bureau, or is no more than the non-promotional price charged for a comparable fixed wireline service in urban areas in the states or U.S. Territories where the eligible telecommunications carrier receives support. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(12). Recipients also are required to provide a detailed description of how they did or did not meet this requirement. This certification requirement will enable the Commission to monitor the use of high-cost support and confirm that consumers have access to rates that are reasonably comparable to those offered in urban areas for comparable services. This information collection has been updated to include competitive ETCs participating in the Alaska Plan. Specifically, competitive ETCs participating in the Alaska Plan shall certify that one service plan that offers broadband data services, if they offer such plans, is (1) substantially similar to a service plan offered by at least one mobile wireless service provider in the cellular market area (CMA) for Anchorage, Alaska, and (2) offered for the same or a lower rate than the matching plan in the CMA for Anchorage. See 47 C.F.R. § 54.308(d).

(6) Additional Reporting Requirements for Rural Broadband Experiment Support Recipients (See 12.g):

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. The Commission requires that rural broadband experiment recipients submit location information so that the Commission can monitor rural broadband experiment recipients' progress in meeting such milestones along with evidence showing that the recipient is deploying service that meets the Commission's public interest obligations. *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). Rural broadband experiment recipients also are required to submit evidence demonstrating that recipients are meeting the public service obligations for the relevant experiment category (e.g., marketing materials that show the voice and broadband packages available to each location, detailing the pricing, offered broadband speed, and

data usage allowances available in the relevant geographic area) for each location.

OMB approved the Commission's proposal to move a modified version of the geocoded location reporting and evidence submission portion of this requirement from this information collection to OMB control number 3060-1228, Connect America Fund – High Cost Portal Filing.

Specifically, moved from this collection was the requirement that rural broadband experiment recipients submit their geocoded locations and associated evidence in the July 1, 2017 FCC Form 481 filing. Starting March 1, 2018, they are required to file this information in the high-cost portal as described in the supporting statement associated with OMB control number 3060-1228, Connect America Fund – High Cost Portal Filing. We therefore now remove the burdens associated with the geocoded location and evidence filing requirement from this information collection.

Remaining in this collection is the requirement that rural broadband experiment recipients must certify in each FCC Form 481 annual report that the recipient is offering broadband meeting the requisite public interest obligations consistent with the category for which they were selected, including broadband speed, latency, usage capacity, and rates that are reasonably comparable to rates for comparable offerings in urban areas. *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). This certification requirement enables the Commission to monitor rural broadband experiment recipients to ensure they are using the support for its intended purposes and are meeting the relevant public interest obligations.

Also remaining in this collection is the requirement that recipients of rural broadband experiment support are required to report in their FCC Form 481 annual reports the number, names, and addresses of community anchor institutions to which the recipients newly began providing access to broadband service in the preceding calendar year. This requirement is a valuable way for the Commission to monitor how recipients are engaging with community anchor institutions, and learn how the networks supported by the experiments will impact anchor institutions and the communities they serve.

(7) Annual Reporting (See 12.h):

All ETCs must include in their annual reports the information that is required by section 54.313, as appropriate. See 47 C.F.R. § 54.313. It is necessary and appropriate for the Commission to obtain such information from all ETCs, both federal-and state-designated, to ensure the continued availability of high-quality voice services and monitor progress in achieving the Commission's broadband goals and to assist the FCC in determining whether the funds are being used appropriately. This reporting requirement ensures that ETCs comply with the conditions of the ETC designation and that universal service funds are used for their intended purposes. The Commission is not at this time seeking approval for the requirement in this section that ETCs submit the results of network performance tests. See 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(6). Items (i)-(ii) below describe unchanged

portions of this requirement, whereas item (iii) describes a modified portion of this requirement, and item (iv) describes the eliminated portions of this requirement. Section 54.313 was renumbered to reflect these changes.

- (i) Annual Reporting. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(4) (See 12.h). To help the Commission reduce waste, fraud, and abuse, increase accountability in its universal service programs, and ensure compliance with various requirements that take into account holding company structure, support recipients are required to report the holding company, operating companies, affiliates, and any branding (a “dba” or “doing-business-as company” or brand designation), for each such entity by Study Area Codes. The *ETC Reporting Streamlining Order* moved this requirement from 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(8) to 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(4), but the requirement remains the same.
  - (ii) Annual Reporting. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(1) (See 12.h). ETCs are required to submit information and data required by 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(1) (formerly 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(6)) separately broken out for both voice and broadband service. ETCs must certify that they are able to function in emergency situations as set forth in 47 C.F.R. § 54.202(a)(2). 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(1). The *ETC Reporting Streamlining Order* moved this requirement from 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(6) to 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(1), but the requirement remains the same.
  - (iii) Annual Reporting. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(2) (See 12.h). To ensure parity between urban and rural rates, ETCs are required to submit a self-certification that the pricing of their voice services is no more than two standard deviations above the national average urban rate for voice services. The *ETC Reporting Streamlining Order* moved this requirement from 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(10) to 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(2), but the requirement remains the same, with a slight modification for competitive ETCs participating in the Alaska Plan. Competitive ETCs participating in the Alaska Plan must certify that their required stand-alone voice plan is (1) substantially similar to a service plan offered by at least one mobile wireless service provider in the cellular market area (CMA) for Anchorage, Alaska, and (2) offered for the same or a lower rate than the matching plan in the CMA for Anchorage. See 47 C.F.R. § 54.308(d).
  - (iv) Annual Reporting. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(1)-(5), (7) (2016) (See 12.h). The *ETC Reporting Streamlining Order* eliminated what was previously 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(1)-(5) and (7), which required reporting of network outage information, unfulfilled service requests, the number of complaints received by an ETC per 1,000 subscribers for both voice and broadband services, and pricing for voice and broadband services, as well as certification of compliance with service quality standards. These deleted subsections were replaced as described in 7.i-iii above.
- (8) Carriers Lacking Terrestrial Backhaul Certification. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(g) (See 12.i). The Commission recognizes that satellite backhaul may limit the performance of

broadband networks as compared to terrestrial backhaul; thus, carriers that are compelled to rely exclusively on satellite backhaul in their study area must certify annually that no terrestrial backhaul options exist. The annual certifications must indicate that the carriers offer broadband service at actual speeds of at least 1 Mbps downstream and 256 kbps upstream within the supported area served by satellite middle-mile facilities. Latency and capacity requirements will not apply to these providers. To the extent that new terrestrial backhaul facilities are constructed, or existing facilities improved sufficiently to meet the relevant speed, latency, and capacity requirements then in effect for broadband service supported by Connect America, within twelve months of the new backhaul facilities becoming commercially available, funding recipients must provide the certifications required in 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(e) or (f) in full. This information collection has been updated to include the certification requirement for rate-of-return carriers participating in the Alaska Plan. Specifically, rate-of-return carriers participating in the Alaska Plan must certify whether, in any portions of a carrier's study area relying exclusively on satellite backhaul, the carrier provides service consistent with its approved performance plan. See 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(g).

***Currently approved requirements that are being eliminated:***

(9) Phase I Investment Annual Milestone Reports. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(b)(2)(ii) (See 12.j).  
The final Connect America Phase I incremental support deployment deadlines ended in early 2017, so reporting requirements associated with that program, including this particular requirement, no longer apply. Connect America Phase I funding recipients were required to report annually the total amount of capital funding expended in the previous year in meeting Connect America Phase I deployment obligations, accompanied by a list of census blocks where funding was spent. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(b)(2)(ii). This information allowed the Commission to track where funding was spent and ensure that funds were used for proper purposes.

(10) Connect America Fund Phase I Incremental Support Acceptance (See 12.k & l):

The final Connect America Phase I incremental support deployment deadlines ended in early 2017, so reporting requirements associated with that program, including this particular requirement, no longer apply.

Carriers accepting Connect America Fund Phase I incremental support were required to meet defined broadband deployment obligations. Eligible carriers were required to notify the Commission, USAC, as well as relevant state and Tribal authorities of the amount, if any, of funds they accept. Carriers accepting funding certified that (a) the locations that will be served in satisfaction of the deployment requirement associated with its identified funds are shown as unserved by fixed terrestrial broadband on the then-current version of the National Broadband Map, or are shown as served only by the incumbent carrier seeking to meet build-out obligations; (b) to the best of the carrier's knowledge, its identified locations are, in fact, unserved by fixed terrestrial broadband; (c) the carrier's current capital improvement plan did not already include plans to complete broadband deployment, without CAF Phase I incremental support, within the next three years to the

locations to be counted to satisfy its deployment requirement; and (d) incremental support will not be used to satisfy any merger commitment or similar regulatory obligation. Carriers accepting funding were also required to identify, for each location to be counted toward satisfaction of the carrier's deployment obligation, the following information: the location's census block information based on the FIPS code, the carrier's OCN, the carrier's SAC, the wire center's eight-digit CLLI code, the latitude (to 6 decimal places), and the longitude (to 6 decimal places). Carriers accepting funding had the option of providing all of the required location-identifying information at the time they file their notice of acceptance of support, or, in the alternative, they could elect to only identify the census blocks and wire centers where they will deploy. Carriers electing this latter option were required to provide all required information for each location no later than one year after filing notices of acceptance for purposes of satisfying the carrier's deployment obligation. That is, carriers electing to initially provide only census block and wire center information were required to provide complete location information for all of their locations no later than one year after they file their notices of acceptance. *See* 47 C.F.R. § 54.312(b).

In addition, to evaluate and ensure that recipients of Connect America Phase I support met their public service build-out obligations, the Commission required periodic reports on the progress of deployments. Therefore, any recipient of incremental Connect America Phase I support was required to certify that two years after filing a notice of acceptance of funding, the recipient has deployed to no fewer than two-thirds of the required number of locations. Three years after accepting funding, the recipient was required to certify that it has deployed to all required locations and that it is offering broadband service of at least 4 Mbps downstream and 1 Mbps upstream, with latency sufficiently low to enable the use of real-time communications, including Voice over Internet Protocol, and with usage caps, if any, that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. *See* 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(b).

(11) Changes in Phase I Deployments (See 12.m):

The final Connect America Phase I incremental support deployment deadlines ended in early 2017, so reporting requirements associated with that program, including this particular requirement, no longer apply.

Connect America Phase I recipients were permitted to deviate from their initially reported deployment plans. However, in doing so, they were required to report the change to the Commission by submitting a letter in WC Docket No. 10-90, the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC or Administrator), relevant state commissions, and any affected Tribal government. 47 C.F.R. § 54.312(b)(3).

(12) Connect America Fund Phase I Certifications (See 12.n):

The final Connect America Phase I incremental support deployment deadlines ended in early 2017, so reporting requirements associated with that program, including this particular requirement, no longer apply.



Phase I of the Connect America Fund provided a substantial amount of support to price cap carriers in exchange for a commitment to deploy broadband-capable infrastructure to areas currently lacking broadband. To prevent waste, fraud, and abuse in the program, carriers were required to certify in various ways that the funds they received were spent only in areas eligible for funding.

The following certifications applied only to Phase I funds accepted in 2013 or later. Renewal of these certifications were necessary in the event that recipients made changes to their Connect America Phase I deployment plans. If a recipient intended to deploy to a location that it had not identified previously, it was required to make all the Phase I certifications. Recipients could make changes to deployment plans as late as 2016.

All Phase I recipients were required to certify in a letter filed in WC Docket No. 10-90:

- 1) that the locations to be served are not shown as already served by either 768 kbps /200 kbps Internet service or 3 Mbps/768 kbps Internet service;
- 2) that to the best of the carrier's knowledge, the locations are in fact unserved by 768 kbps /200 kbps Internet service or 3 Mbps/768 kbps Internet service, as appropriate;
- 3) the carrier's current capital improvement plan did not already include plans to complete broadband deployment within the next three years to the locations to be counted to satisfy the deployment obligation;
- 4) incremental support will not be used to satisfy any merger commitment or similar regulatory obligation; and
- 5) the carrier has undertaken due diligence to determine the locations in question are not within the service area of either Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) or Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) projects that will provide Internet access with speeds of at least 3 Mbps downstream and 768 upstream.

Any Phase I recipient that wished to satisfy its Phase I deployment obligations by building in census blocks that received funding through BIP or BTOP was required to certify to the Commission that the particular locations its planned to serve would not receive funding under BIP or BTOP.

- (13) Geocoded Information for Phase I Two- and Three-Year Milestone Reports. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(b) (See 12.o). The final Connect America Phase I incremental support deployment deadlines ended in early 2017, so reporting requirements associated with that program, including this particular requirement, no longer apply. Carriers under Connect America Phase I were required to deploy to a set number of locations to satisfy the obligation attached to any funding they elect to receive. Two and three years after accepting funding, recipients of Connect America Phase I funding were required to file reports on their progress toward meeting their obligations. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(b). These

reports included the geocoded information for each location to which a carrier deployed in meeting its Phase I obligations. Geocoded locations are necessary for the Commission to verify that carriers have in fact deployed to the number of locations claimed. *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket 10-90, Report and Order, FCC 13-73 (May 22, 2013).

- (14) Broadband Initiatives Program/Broadband Technology Opportunities Program Annual Milestone Reports. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(b)(2)(i) (See 12.p). The final Connect America Phase I incremental support deployment deadlines ended in early 2017, so reporting requirements associated with that program, including this particular requirement, no longer apply. Phase I funding recipients were prohibited from satisfying their deployment obligations by deploying to locations served by the BIP or the BTOP. This requirement promoted efficient use of government funds by ensuring that two government programs do not pay for broadband to be deployed to the same location. To ensure that carriers abided by the restriction on building to BIP and BTOP locations, the Commission required carriers to certify in annual milestone reports that, to the best of the recipient's knowledge, the locations in question were not receiving support under BIP or BTOP for projects that will provide broadband with speeds of at least 4 Mbps downstream and 1 Mbps upstream. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(b)(2)(i).

- (15) Connect America Fund Phase II Challenges and Responses (FCC Form 505) (See 12.q):

The Wireline Competition Bureau of the Commission set forth a challenge process by which carriers could contest the status of census blocks as shown on the National Broadband Map. *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90, Order, DA 13-1113, at paras. 4-22 (Wireline Comp. Bur. May 16, 2013). This process has been completed, so we now reduce the burdens associated with this requirement to zero and eliminate FCC Form 505.

All parties wishing to raise a challenge or respond to a challenge were required to file their challenge with the Bureau using FCC Form 505. Parties were required to submit their name, FCC Registration number (if applicable), the name, mailing address, e-mail address, and phone number of the person filling out the challenge form. Parties were also required to submit a certification that all information in the form is correct to the best of their knowledge, and include the name, e-mail address, and phone number of the person making that certification.

Parties challenging that a census block shown as served is in fact unserved were required to submit the Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) code for the block, the state the block is located in, the name of any provider shown as providing disqualifying service to that block, an indication of what criteria of service the challenger believes is not being met, an indication of what type of evidence supports the challenge, and any additional comments believed to be necessary. Parties were also required to certify that they engaged in due diligence to verify their claims and submit as attachments any evidence supporting the challenge.

Parties challenging that a census block that is shown as unserved is in fact served were required to submit the FIPS code for the block, the state the block is located in, the name of the entity that provides service, the FCC Registration Number of the party filing the challenge (if the party filing the challenge is also the entity providing service), a certification that the census block is served by unsubsidized broadband and voice services meeting the Commission's performance and pricing criteria, an indication of what type of evidence supports the challenge, and any additional comments believed to be necessary. Parties were also required to submit as attachments any evidence supporting the challenge.

Parties making a challenge were required to serve a copy of their challenge on the challenged party, or certify that such service was completed or that a good faith effort was made to provide such service.

Parties responding to a challenge were required to submit the FIPS code for the block, the state the block is located in, the name of the entity that made the initial challenge and its FCC Registration Number (if provided), an indication as to what performance or pricing criteria is at issue, an indication of what type of evidence supports the challenge, and any additional comments believed to be necessary. Parties were also required to submit as attachments any evidence supporting the response.

***Currently approved requirements we are proposing to move into information collection 3060-0233:***

On August 11, 2017, OMB approved a non-substantive change to move FCC Forms 507, 508, and 509 and the accompanying instructions to the information collection with OMB control number 3060-0233. We propose to move the requirements associated with those forms to OMB control number 3060-0233 as well.

(16) Line Counts (FCC Form 507) (See 12.r & s).

Rate-of-return carriers are required to file FCC Form 507, Connect America Fund-Broadband Loop Support Mechanism Line Count Report, to report their line counts for voice lines, by disaggregation zone and customer class, including line counts for consumer broadband-only lines. See 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.902(a)(1)-(2). The collection of line counts for broadband only lines allows the Commission to monitor the provision of services supported by CAF-BLS. This data is collected annually, on July 31. Carriers may also voluntarily file line count data on a quarterly basis.

A carrier must also certify that the line count data are accurate to the best of the carrier's knowledge and ability. If a carrier elects to have an agent for the carrier perform the filing on its behalf, the carrier must authorize the agent to make the filing and certify that it has provided accurate data to the agent for the purpose of performing the filing. The agent must then also certify that the line count data are accurate to the best of its knowledge and ability.

(17) Projected Cost and Revenue Data (FCC Form 508) (See 12.r, t, & u).

FCC Form 508, Connect America Fund-Broadband Loop Support Mechanism Projected Cost and Revenue, collects projected consumer broadband-only loop cost and revenue data, in addition to the common line cost and revenue data, as necessary to implement the CAF-BLS mechanism. Carriers file forecasted data covering the upcoming July 1 to June 30 funding year on March 31 each year. See 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.902(c)(1), 54.903(a)(1), and 54.903(a)(3).

USAC uses this data to calculate a “provisional” ICLS amount for each carrier, which is later trued-up based on actual cost and revenue data filed on FCC Form 509. Consistent with their average schedule status, average schedule companies are required to submit information necessary in order for the Administrator to calculate common line revenue requirements for average schedule companies.

In accordance with 47 C.F.R. § 54.705, the Administrator has the authority to perform audits of beneficiaries of the CAF-BLS (formerly known as ICLS) mechanism to ensure the accuracy of data submitted.

A carrier must also certify that the projected data are accurate to the best of the carrier’s knowledge and ability and that the cost data are compliant with the Commission’s cost allocation rules and do not reflect duplicative assignment of costs to the consumer broadband-only loop and special access categories. If a carrier elects to have an agent perform the filing on its behalf, the carrier must authorize the agent to make the filing and certify that it has provided accurate data to the agent for the purpose of performing the filing. The agent must then also certify that the projected data are accurate to the best of its knowledge and ability. Carriers must file the data by March 31 for the following July 1 to June 30 funding year. Carriers are no longer permitted to file updates to the data prior to June 30 due to the requirement that the Administrator calculate and publish forecasted CAF-BLS to be used in setting tariff rates.

(18) Actual Cost and Revenue Data (FCC Form 509) (See 12.r, v, & w).

FCC Form 509, Connect America Fund-Broadband Loop Support Actual Cost and Revenue Data, is used to collect actual consumer broadband-only loop cost and revenue data, in addition to common line cost and revenue data, as necessary to implement the new CAF-BLS mechanism. On December 31 each year, carriers file actual data covering the prior calendar year. The additional data will be collected beginning December 31, 2018, for the 2017 calendar year. Data collected on December 31, 2016 and 2017 will include only common line cost and revenue data. See 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.902(a)(1), 54.902(b)(1), 54.902(b)(3), and 54.903(a)(4).

The Administrator uses the data to calculate final ICLS amounts, which are reconciled against the ICLS provided previously based on forecasted data collected on FCC Form 508. Consistent with their average schedule status, average schedule companies are

required to submit information necessary for the Administrator to calculate common line revenue requirements for average schedule companies.

In accordance with 47 C.F.R. § 54.705, the Administrator has the authority to perform audits of beneficiaries of the CAF-BLS (formerly known as ICLS) mechanism to ensure the accuracy of data submitted.

A carrier must also certify that the actual data are accurate to the best of the carrier's knowledge and ability and that the cost data is compliant with the Commission's cost allocation rules and does not reflect duplicative assignment of costs to the consumer broadband-only loop and special access categories. If a carrier elects to have an agent perform the filing on its behalf, the carrier must authorize the agent to make the filing and certify that it has provided accurate data to the agent for the purpose of performing the filing. The agent must then also certify that the projected data are accurate to the best of its knowledge and ability.

***Currently approved requirements in this information collection (no changes to requirements):***

Through the Connect America Fund, the Commission provides substantial amounts of funding to private entities in order to deploy advanced voice and broadband networks throughout the country. To ensure these funds are properly used, various reporting requirements are imposed on funding recipients. The reports, information, and certifications discussed in this section must be submitted annually to the Administrator.

Certain recipients of high-cost support must report the following:

(19) Capital Expenditure Reporting for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients (See 12.x):

Each year, price cap carriers will be required to report the total amount of Phase II support, if any, the price cap carrier used for capital expenditures in the previous calendar year. The Commission requires that price cap carriers submit this information so that it can monitor price cap carriers' progress in meeting buildout milestones associated with their accepted support. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(e).

(20) E-rate Certification Requirement for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients and Rate-of-Return Carrier High-Cost Recipients (See 12.y):

The Commission will require price cap carriers that elect Phase II model-based support and rate-of-return carriers that receive high-cost support to bid on category one telecommunications and Internet access services in response to all FCC Form 470 postings seeking broadband service that meets connectivity targets for the schools and libraries universal service support program for eligible schools and libraries located in within any area in a census block where the price cap carrier is receiving Phase II model-

based support or in the service area of a rate-of-return carrier. Such bids must be at rates reasonably comparable to rates charged to eligible schools in libraries in urban areas for comparable offerings. Once this requirement has been fully implemented, price cap carriers that accepted Phase II model-based support and rate-of-return carriers that receive high-cost support will be required to certify in their annual FCC Form 481 reports that they have met this requirement. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(e)(2)(V), (f)(1)(iii). This certification requirement will enable the Commission to monitor price cap carriers' and rate-of-return carriers' compliance with this requirement.

In addition to the other reporting requirements contained in 47 C.F.R. §54.313(a), any recipient of high-cost support that serves Tribal lands must report the following additional information:

- (21) Tribal Engagement Reporting. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(5) (See 12.z). To ensure the effective exchange of information that will lead to a common understanding between Tribal governments and ETCs on the deployment and improvement of communications on Tribal lands, to the extent an ETC serves Tribal lands, it is required to provide documents or information that the ETC engaged with Tribal governments. The *ETC Reporting Streamlining Order* moved this requirement from 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(9) to 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(5), but the requirement remains the same.

In addition to the reporting requirements contained in 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a), price cap carriers that receive frozen high-cost support must also provide the following additional information:

- (22) Connect America Frozen High Cost Support Certification. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(c) (See 12.aa). The Commission froze support under its high-cost support mechanisms – high-cost loop support (HCLS), safety net additive (SNA), safety valve support (SVS), high-cost model support (HCMS), local switching support (LSS), interstate access support (IAS), and interstate common line support (ICLS) – for price cap carriers and their rate-of-return affiliates, and called it “frozen high-cost support.” Recipients of frozen high-cost support must annually certify that increasing levels of support have been used to achieve the goal of universal availability of voice and broadband. In future years, recipients must certify that a specified proportion of funding was used to build and operate broadband-capable networks used to offer the provider’s own retail broadband service in areas substantially unserved by an unsubsidized competitor.

In addition to the reporting requirements in 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a), any price cap carriers receiving high-cost support to offset reductions in access charges must provide the following additional information:

- (23) Price Cap Carrier High-Cost Support for Access Charges Certification. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(d) (See 12.bb). All price cap carriers that receive support pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.304, to offset reductions in access charges, must use such support to build and operate broadband-capable networks used to offer the provider’s own retail service in areas substantially unserved by an unsubsidized competitor. To monitor the use of such

support and hold recipients accountable to their public interest obligations, recipients of such support must annually certify that they are doing so.

In addition to the reporting requirements in 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a), any rate-of-return carrier shall provide the following additional information:

- (24) Privately Held Rate-of-Return Financial Information. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(f)(2) (See 12.cc). The Commission can obtain publicly available financial information from publicly traded companies. To ensure that support is sufficient but not excessive, privately held rate-of-return carriers that receive high-cost support must submit various forms of financial statements. Those companies that borrow funds from the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) must submit a copy of their RUS Operating Report for Telecommunications Borrowers. Carriers that do not borrow from RUS, but that undergo financial audits in the ordinary course of business, must either file a copy of their audited financial statements or provide financial information in a form consistent with the RUS Operating Report for Telecommunications Borrowers. Carriers that are not audited in the ordinary course of business must either file a financial statement that has been subject to review by a certified public accountant or file financial information in a format consistent with the RUS Operating Report for Telecommunications Borrowers. These financial disclosures may be filed pursuant to a protective order.

Carriers providing updates to their reported rate information submit the following information:

- (25) Residential Rate Updates. 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(h) (See 12.dd). All incumbent local exchange carrier recipients of high-cost support must already report all of their rates for residential local service for all portions of their service area, as well as state fees (state subscriber line charges, state universal service fees and mandatory extended area service charges), to the extent the sum of those rates and fees are below the rate floor, and the number of lines for each rate specified. Carriers shall report lines and rates in effect as of June 1. In addition to the annual filing, local exchange carriers may file updates of their rates for residential local service, as well as state fees, on January 2 of each year. If a local exchange carrier reduces its rates and the sum of the reduced rates and state fees are below the rate floor, the local exchange carrier shall file such an update. For the update, carriers shall report lines and rates in effect as of December 1.

Additional requirements include:

- (26) State Certification Letter under 254(e) of the Act (See 12.ee):

The Commission requires that states (or ETCs where the state lacks jurisdiction over ETCs) file annual certifications with the Commission to ensure that carriers use universal service support “only for the provision, maintenance and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended” consistent with section 254(e). Accordingly, the Commission requires states that wish to receive federal universal service high-cost support for carriers within their boundaries (or ETCs where the state lacks jurisdiction over ETCs) to file a

certification with the Commission and USAC stating that all federal high-cost funds flowing to carriers in that state has been and will be used in a manner consistent with section 254(e). Absent such certification, carriers will not receive such support. *See* 47 C.F.R. § 54.314.

The Commission recognizes that some state commissions may have only limited regulatory oversight to ensure that federal support is reflected in intrastate rates. States nonetheless may certify to the Commission that a carrier in the state has accounted to the state commission for its receipt of federal support and that such support has been and will be used “only for the provision, maintenance and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended.” Incumbent and competitive ETCs serving lines in the state may formulate plans to ensure compliance with section 254(e), and present those plans to the state, so that the state may make the appropriate certification to the Commission. Absent the filing of such certification, carriers will not receive support. *See* 47 C.F.R. § 54.314.

(27) Support in Competitive Study Areas (See 12.ff):

Rural carriers and competitive ETCs are required to file line count data on a quarterly basis upon competitive entry in rural carrier study areas. The rural carrier line counts are used to determine the appropriate per-line support for competitive eligible telecommunications carriers serving the same area. The competitive eligible telecommunications carrier’s line counts (collected on FCC Form 525) are used to calculate their total support.

Competitive ETCs that are Alaska Plan participants shall no longer be required to file line counts. *See* 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.317(d).

(28) Safety Valve (See 12.gg):

The “safety valve” mechanism enables rural carriers acquiring access lines to receive additional support over a period of five years to reflect post-transaction investment made by the acquiring carrier. Once relevant regulatory approvals are obtained and the transaction is closed, the rural carrier must provide written notice to USAC that they have acquired access lines that may become eligible for safety valve support and identify when the index year for determining eligibility began. *See* 47 C.F.R. § 54.305(f).

(29) Local End User Rates and State Regulated Fees (See 12.hh):

The Commission requires carriers receiving high-cost loop support or Connect America Phase I support to report, on an annual basis, the local end user rates that fall below a specified urban rate floor and the number of lines associated with each rate. *See* 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(h). This permits USAC to calculate reductions in support. Carriers are expected to provide local end user rate and state fee information in electronic form.

(30) Recordkeeping Requirement (See 12.ii):

Carriers receiving high-cost or Connect America Fund support are subject to random compliance audits and other investigations to ensure compliance with program rules and



orders, and carriers must retain records required to demonstrate to auditors that the support received was consistent with the universal service high-cost program rules. The document retention period is ten years. The carriers must make these documents and records available to the Commission, any of its Bureaus or Offices, USAC, and to their respective auditors. See 47 C.F.R. § 54.320(b).

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 requirements to determine eligibility for high-cost universal service support. The Commission will also use the information collections to conduct oversight and ensure that Connect America funds are spent in accordance with the rules of the program.
3. *Technological collection techniques.* In an effort to reduce any burden created by these information collection requirements, the Commission shall permit all respondents to file responses using automated, electronic, mechanical or other technological collection techniques where feasible. Respondents must file Form 481 online through USAC's "E-File" portal at <https://forms.universalservice.org/usaclogin/login.asp>.
4. *Efforts to identify duplication.* There will be no duplication of information. The information sought is unique to each carrier or respondent and similar information is not already available. The Commission is using already established reporting and recordkeeping requirements to satisfy certain statutory directives and eligibility criteria.
5. *Impact on small entities.* The collection of information may affect small entities as well as large entities. The requirements in this collection are necessary to ensure compliance with high-cost universal service support requirements, and are designed to limit the burden on small entities as much as possible. Existing requirements that were duplicative or no longer necessary have been streamlined to further minimize burdens, particularly for small entities.
6. *Consequences if information is not collected.* The information collected is used to determine eligibility for high-cost universal service support and to conduct oversight and ensure that high-cost universal service support is spent in accordance with the rules of the program. Without the requested information, the Commission and USAC will not be able to determine a carrier's eligibility or monitor compliance with high-cost universal service support requirements. This 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 also published in the *Federal Register* pursuant to 5 C.F.R. § 1320.8(d) on March 21, 2018 See 83 FR 12389. [[No comments were received from the public.]]
9. *Payments or gifts to respondents.* The Commission does not anticipate providing any payment or gifts to respondents.
10. *Assurances of confidentiality.* Parties may submit confidential information in relation to [[sub-item bb.]] in Item 12 below pursuant to a protective order. 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 collections 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. Newly Available Backhaul Reporting for Alaska Plan Participants (Form 481) (new requirement):**

- (1) Number of respondents: Approximately 21 rate-of-return carriers and competitive ETCs participating in the Alaska Plan will be required to certify and submit information regarding the commercial availability of backhaul.
- (2) Frequency of response: Annually and occasionally.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 7 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 147 hours.

7 hours per respondent for 21 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

21 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 21 responses x 7 hours = **147 total annual hours.**

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$ 5,880 (147 hours x \$40/hour).

- (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each Alaska Plan participant will take 7 hours preparing and submitting the relevant information regarding commercial availability of backhaul and the relevant certification:

21 (responses) x 7 (hours to prepare and submit information) x \$40/hr. = \$5,880 .

**b. Capital Expenditure Documentation for Rate-of-Return and Competitive ETC Alaska Plan Participants (new requirement):**

- (1) Number of respondents: Approximately 13 rate-of-return carriers and competitive ETCs participating in the Alaska Plan will be required to retain and provide information on capital and operating expenditures.
- (2) Frequency of response: Annually.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 2 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 26 hours.

2 hours per respondent for 13 carriers retaining documents on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

13 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 13 responses x 2 hours = **26 total annual hours.**

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$1,040. (26 hours x \$40/hour).
- (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each carrier will spend at least 2 hours to track and retain documentation. 13 (responses) x 2 (hours to comply with document retention requirements) x \$40 per hour = \$1,040. The number of respondents is based on the combination of the rate-of-return carriers and wireless affiliates having combined records.

**c. Reporting of New Locations by Connect America Fund-Broadband Loop Support (CAF-BLS) Recipients (Form 481) (new requirement):**

- (1) Number of respondents: Approximately 485 rate-of-return carriers participating in the CAF-BLS program with 80 percent or greater deployment of 10/1 Mbps broadband service in their entire study areas, based on June 2015 FCC Form 477 data, will report progress on the number of locations where 10/1 Mbps or better broadband service has been deployed within their study area in the prior calendar year.

- (2) Frequency of response: Annually.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 3 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 1,455 hours.

3 hours per respondent for 485 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

485 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 485 responses x 3 hours = **1,455 total annual hours**.

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$ 58,200. (1,455 hours x \$40/hour).
- (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each CAF-BLS participant subject to this reporting requirement will take about 3 hours gathering and submitting information on the number of locations where 10/1 Mbps or better broadband service has been deployed in the prior calendar year. 485 (responses) x 3 (hours for gathering and submitting information on deployed locations) x \$40 per hour = \$58,200.

**d. Connect America Fund Phase II Requirements (no revisions):**

- (1) Number of respondents: Approximately 9 carriers or holding companies receiving Connect America Phase II support will be required to report the number, names and, addresses of community anchor institutions to which they newly began providing access to broadband service.
- (2) Frequency of response: Annually.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 2 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 18 hours.

2 hours per respondent for 9 respondents filing annually. Total annual hour burden is: 9 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 9 responses x 2 hours = **18 hours**.

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$720. (18 hours x \$40/hour.).
- (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each Phase II funding recipient will spend at least 2 hours collecting and reporting data on newly served community anchor institutions. 9 (responses) x 2 (hours to track, tabulate, and prepare reporting requirements) x \$40/hr. = \$720.

**e. Rate-of-Return Carrier Requirements (modified to include provisions specific to Alaska Plan participants):**

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 1,141 rate-of-return carriers will be required to certify that they are offering broadband upon reasonable request meeting the Commission's requirements and report the number, names, and addresses of community anchor institutions to which they newly began providing access to broadband service.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually.

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

(4) Estimated time per response: 3 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 3,423 hours.

1 hour per respondent for 1,141 respondents filing annually. Total annual hour burden is: 1,141 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 1,141 responses x 3 hours = **3,423 hours**.

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$136,920. (3,423 hours x \$40/hour.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each rate-of-return carrier, including rate-of-return carriers participating in the Alaska Plan, will spend approximately 3 hours certifying they are offering the required broadband service and reporting data on newly served community anchor institutions. 1,141 (responses) x 3 (hours to track, tabulate, and prepare reporting requirements and confirm and certify compliance with broadband obligations) x \$40/hr. = \$136,920.

**f. Reasonably Comparable Rates Certification for Broadband (FCC Form 481) (modified to include Alaska Plan carriers):**

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 1,182. Almost all price cap carriers, rate-of-return carriers, Alaska Plan competitive ETC participants, and rural broadband experiment recipients will be required to make this certification.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually. Carriers will be required to file this certification with their annual reports.

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

(4) Estimated time per response: 4 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 4,728 hours.

4 hours per respondent for 1,182 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

1,182 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 1,182 responses x 4 hours = **4,728 total annual hours.**

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$189,120. (4,728 hours x \$40/hour).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each carrier that accepted Phase II model-based support and each rate-of-return carrier that receives high-cost support will spend at least 4 hours certifying that it has met the reasonably comparable rates requirements.

1,182 (responses) x 4 (hours to confirm and certify compliance) x \$40/hr. = \$189,120.

**g. Additional Annual Reporting for Rural Broadband Experiments (FCC Form 481) (modified to retain only the requirement that the recipients certify that they are offering broadband meeting the requisite public interest obligations and report certain data related to newly served community anchor institutions):**

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 20. Recipients of rural broadband experiment support must report this data and make these certifications.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually.

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

(4) Estimated time per response: 3 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 60 hours.

3 hours per respondent for 20 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

20 respondents x 1 certification per respondent = 20 responses x 3 hours = **60 total annual hours.**

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$2,400. (60 hours x \$40/hr.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each rural broadband experiment support recipient will take 3 hours to gather and submit the community anchor institution data to the Commission and make the required certification:

20 (responses) x 3 (hours to prepare certification) x \$40/hr. = \$2,400.

**h. Annual Reporting Requirements for All Funding Recipients (modified to reduce the required reporting obligations for high-cost recipients):**

- (1) Number of Respondents: Approximately 1,877 telephone companies.
- (2) Frequency of Response: Annually.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 5 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 9,385 hours.

5 hours per respondent for 1,877 respondents filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is: 1,877 respondents x 1 submission per respondent = 1,877 responses x 5 hours = **9,385 hours**.

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$375,400. (9,385 hours x \$40/hour.).
- (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each carrier will spend a total of approximately 5 hours preparing and submitting the emergency certification and information regarding any holding companies, operating companies, and affiliates: 1,877 (responses) x 5 (hours preparing and submitting certification and company information) x \$40 per hour = \$375,400.

**i. Carriers Lacking Terrestrial Backhaul Certification (modified to include provisions specific to Alaska Plan participants)**

- (1) Number of respondents: Fewer than 20 carriers that receive funding but rely exclusively on satellite for backhaul or are Alaska Plan participants that rely exclusively on satellite backhaul in a portion of their study areas must certify as to the performance of their broadband service.
- (2) Frequency of response: Annually.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 15 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 300 hours.

15 hours per respondent for 20 respondents filing annually. Total annual hour burden is: 20 respondents x 1 certification per respondent = 20 responses x 15 hours = **300 hours**.

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$12,000. (300 hours x \$40/hour.).
- (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each carrier receiving funding but relying exclusively on satellite for backhaul will spend at least 15 hours to confirm and certify

compliance as to the performance of its broadband service. 20 (responses) x 15 (hours to confirm and certify compliance) x \$40/hr. = \$12,000.

**j. Phase I Investment Annual Milestone Reports (Form 481) (eliminated requirement):**

- (1) Number of respondents: 0.
- (2) Frequency of response: Annually.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: 0.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 0 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 0 hours.

0 hours per respondent for 0 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

0 respondents x 0 reports per respondent = 0 responses x 0 hours = **0 total annual hours.**

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$0. (0 hours x \$40/hour).

(7) Explanation of calculation: The final Connect America Phase I incremental support deadlines were in early 2017, so the associated reporting requirements, including this particular requirement, no longer apply. The total annual hour burden and in-house costs for respondents will therefore be 0.

**k. Connect America Fund Phase I Incremental Support Acceptance (eliminated requirement):**

- (1) Number of respondents: 0.
- (2) Frequency of response: On occasion.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: 0.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 0 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 0 hours.

0 hours per respondent for 0 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

0 respondents x 0 reports per respondent = 0 responses x 0 hours = **0 total annual hours.**

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$0. (0 hours x \$40/hour).



(7) Explanation of calculation: The final Connect America Phase I incremental support deadlines were in early 2017, so the associated reporting requirements, including this particular requirement, no longer apply. The total annual hour burden and in-house costs for respondents will therefore be 0.

**l. Connect America Fund Phase I Incremental Support Certification (eliminated requirement):**

(1) Number of respondents: 0.

(2) Frequency of response: On occasion.

(3) Total number of responses per respondent: 0.

(4) Estimated time per response: 0 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 0 hours.

0 hours per respondent for 0 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

0 respondents x 0 reports per respondent = 0 responses x 0 hours = **0 total annual hours.**

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$0. (0 hours x \$40/hour).

(7) Explanation of calculation: The final Connect America Phase I incremental support deadlines were in early 2017, so the associated reporting requirements, including this particular requirement, no longer apply. The total annual hour burden and in-house costs for respondents will therefore be 0.

**m. Changes in Phase I Deployments (eliminated requirement):**

(1) Number of respondents: 0.

(2) Frequency of response: On occasion.

(3) Total number of responses per respondent: 0.

(4) Estimated time per response: 0 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 0 hours.

0 hours per respondent for 0 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

0 respondents x 0 reports per respondent = 0 responses x 0 hours = **0 total annual hours.**

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$0. (0 hours x \$40/hour).

(7) Explanation of calculation: The final Connect America Phase I incremental support deadlines were in early 2017, so the associated reporting requirements, including this particular requirement, no longer apply. The total annual hour burden and in-house costs for respondents will therefore be 0.

**n. Connect America Phase I Certifications (eliminated requirement):**

(1) Number of respondents: 0.

(2) Frequency of response: One-time or on occasion.

(3) Total number of responses per respondent: 0.

(4) Estimated time per response: 0 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 0 hours.

0 hours per respondent for 0 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

0 respondents x 0 reports per respondent = 0 responses x 0 hours = **0 total annual hours.**

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$0. (0 hours x \$40/hour).

(7) Explanation of calculation: The final Connect America Phase I incremental support deadlines were in early 2017, so the associated reporting requirements, including this particular requirement, no longer apply. The total annual hour burden and in-house costs for respondents will therefore be 0.

**o. Geocoded Information for Phase I Two-and Three-Year Milestone Reports (FCC Form 481) (eliminated requirement):**

(1) Number of respondents: 0.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually.

(3) Total number of responses per respondent: 0.

(4) Estimated time per response: 0 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 0 hours.

0 hours per respondent for 0 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

0 respondents x 0 reports per respondent = 0 responses x 0 hours = **0 total annual hours**.

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$0. (0 hours x \$40/hour).

(7) Explanation of calculation: The final Connect America Phase I incremental support deadlines were in early 2017, so the associated reporting requirements, including this particular requirement, no longer apply. The total annual hour burden and in-house costs for respondents will therefore be 0.

**p. Broadband Initiatives Program/Broadband Technology Opportunities Program Annual Milestone Reports (FCC Form 481) (eliminated requirement):**

(1) Number of respondents: 0.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually.

(3) Total number of responses per respondent: 0.

(4) Estimated time per response: 0 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 0 hours.

0 hours per respondent for 0 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

0 respondents x 0 reports per respondent = 0 responses x 0 hours = **0 total annual hours**.

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$0. (0 hours x \$40/hour).

(7) Explanation of calculation: The final Connect America Phase I incremental support deadlines were in early 2017, so the associated reporting requirements, including this particular requirement, no longer apply. The total annual hour burden and in-house costs for respondents will therefore be 0.

**q. Connect America Phase II Challenges and Responses (FCC Form 505) (eliminated requirement):**

(1) Number of respondents: 0.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually.

(3) Total number of responses per respondent: 0.

(4) Estimated time per response: 0 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 0 hours.

0 hours per respondent for 0 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

0 respondents x 0 reports per respondent = 0 responses x 0 hours = **0 total annual hours**.

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$0. (0 hours x \$40/hour).

(7) Explanation of calculation: The Connect America Phase II challenge process has been completed, so we now reduce the burdens associated with this requirement to zero and remove Form 505 from this collection.

**r. Validation of CAF-BLS Cost and Revenue, filed in response to the Administrator's request for further validation (no revisions):**

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 100 carriers.

(2) Frequency of response: Annual reporting requirements.

(3) Total annual responses per respondent: Approximately 1. The Commission estimates that respondents make one information submission annually.

(4) Estimated time per response: 4 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 400 hours.

4 hours per respondent for 100 carriers that file on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

100 respondents x 1 submission per respondent = 100 responses x 4 hours = **400 total annual hours**. The Commission estimates that respondents require approximately four hours to prepare and submit information necessary for the Administrator to calculate common line and consumer broadband-only loop revenue requirements for average schedule companies.

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$16,000. (400 hours x \$40/hr.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that time to comply with the requirement will be 100 (responses) x 4 (hours to prepare and submit data) x \$40/hr. = \$16,000.

**s. CAF-BLS Line Counts (FCC Form 507) (we are proposing to move this requirement from this information collection to OMB control number 3060-0233):**

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 1,132 Rate-of-Return carriers.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually.

The Commission estimates that each carrier must file one line count data submission with the Administrator annually.

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

(4) Estimated time per response: 6 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 6,792 hours.

6 hours per respondent for 1,132 carriers that are filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

1,132 respondents x 1 submission per respondent = 1,132 responses x 6 hours, = **6,792 total annual hours**. The Commission estimates that each carrier requires approximately six hours to prepare and submit its line count data annually, by disaggregation zone, if applicable, and customer class.

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$271,680. (6,792 hours x \$40/hr.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that time to comply with the requirement will be 1,132 (number of responses) x 6 (hours to prepare and submit line count data) x \$40/hr. = \$271,680.

**t. Projected CAF-BLS Cost and Revenue Data (Rate-of-Return Carriers) (FCC Form 508) (we are proposing to move this requirement from this information collection to OMB control number 3060-0233):**

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 766 Rate-of-Return carriers.

(2) Frequency of response: Annual reporting requirement.

The Commission estimates that the Rate-of-Return carriers report to the Administrator their projected common line cost and revenue data and projected consumer broadband-only loop cost and revenue data for each study area in which they operate.

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

(4) Estimated time per response: 2 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 1,532 hours.

2 hours per respondent for 766 carriers that file on an annual basis.

766 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 766 responses x 2 hours = **1,532 total annual hours**. The Commission estimates that respondents require approximately two hours to prepare and report their projected common line revenue requirements for each study area in which they operate.

(6) Total Estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$61,280. (1,532 hours x \$40.00/ hr.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that time to comply with the requirement will be 766 (responses) x 2 (hours to prepare and report data) x \$40/hr. = \$61,280.

**u. Projected CAF-BLS Cost and Revenue Data (Average Schedule Carriers) (FCC Form 508) (we are proposing to move this requirement from this information collection to OMB control number 3060-0233):**

(1) Number of Respondents: Approximately 366 average schedule carriers.

(2) Frequency of response: Annual reporting requirement.

The Commission estimates that the average schedule carriers are required to submit information annually that is necessary for the Administrator to calculate common line and consumer broadband-only cost and revenue data for average schedule companies.

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

(4) Estimated time per response: 1 hour.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 366 hours.

1 hour per respondent for 366 carriers that file on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

366 respondents x 1 submission per respondent = 366 responses x 1 hour = **366 total annual hours**. The Commission estimates that the carriers require one hour to prepare and submit their information.

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$14,640. (366 hours x \$40.00/hr.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that time to comply with the requirement will be 366 (responses) x 1 (hour to prepare and submit their information) x \$40/hr. = \$14,640.

**v. CAF-BLS Actual Cost and Revenue Data (Annually) (FCC Form 509) (we are proposing to move this requirement from this information collection to OMB control number 3060-0233):**

- (1) Number of respondents: Approximately 766 Rate-of-Return carriers.
- (2) Frequency of response: Annual reporting requirement.

Rate-of-Return carriers must report on December 31st of each year, to the Administrator, their actual interstate common line and consumer broadband-only loop cost and revenue data.

- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 4 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 3,064 hours.

4 hours per respondent for 766 carriers that file on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

766 respondents x 1 response per respondent = 766 responses x 4 hours = **3,064 total annual hours**. The Commission estimates that each rate-of-return carrier requires approximately four hours to prepare and submit to the Administrator its actual interstate common line and consumer broadband-only loop cost and revenue data.

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$122,560. (3,064 hours x \$40/hr.).
- (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that time to comply with the requirement will be 766 (responses) x 4 (hours to prepare and submit cost and revenue data) x \$40/hr. = \$122,560.

**w. CAF-BLS True Ups (Average Schedule Carriers) (FCC Form 509) (we are proposing to move this requirement from this information collection to OMB control number 3060-0233):**

- (1) Number of respondents: Approximately 366 average schedule carriers.
- (2) Frequency of response: Annual reporting requirements.

The Commission estimates that each average schedule carrier makes one information report annually.

- (3) Total responses per respondent: Approximately 1.

(4) Estimated time per response: 1 hour.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 366 hours.

1 hour per respondent for 366 carriers that are filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

366 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 366 responses x 1 hour = **366 total annual hours**. The Commission estimates that average schedule carriers require approximately one hour to submit information that is necessary for the Administrator to calculate the common line and consumer broadband-only loop revenue requirements for average schedule companies.

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$14,640. (366 hours x \$40/hr.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that time to comply with the requirement will be 366 (number of responses) x 1 (hour to report and submit information) x \$40/hr. = \$14,640.

**x. Capital Operating Expense Data for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients (FCC Form 481) (no revisions):**

(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 price cap carrier accepting funding must file the reports annually after accepting support.

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

(4) Estimated time per response: 1 hour.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 9 hours.

1 hour 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 1 hour = **9 total annual hours**.

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$360. (9 hours x \$40/hr.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each Phase II model-based support recipient will take 1 hour to gather and submit the total amount of Phase II support paid for capital expenses to the Commission:

9 (responses) x 1 (hours to prepare report) x \$40/hr. = \$360.



**y. E-rate Certification for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients and Rate-of-Return Carrier High-Cost Recipients (FCC Form 481) (no revisions):**

- (1) Number of respondents: Approximately 1,150. Only price cap carriers that elect to receive Phase II model-based support and rate-of-return carriers that receive high-cost support must make this certification.
- (2) Frequency of response: Annually. Carriers accepting Phase II model-based support and rate-of-return carriers that receive high-cost support will be required to file this certification once the requirement has been fully implemented.
- (3) Total responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 2 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 2,300 hours.

2 hours per respondent for 1,150 carriers filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is calculated as follows:

1,150 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 1,150 responses x 2 hours = **2,300 total annual hours.**

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$92,000. (2,300 hours x \$40/hour).
  - (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each carrier that accepted Phase II model-based support and each rate-of-return carrier that receives high-cost support will spend at least 2 hours to confirm compliance and certify that it has met the E-rate requirements.
- 1,150 (responses) x 2 (hours to confirm and certify compliance) x \$40/hr. = \$92,000.

**z. Tribal Engagement Reporting (no revisions):**

- (1) Number of Respondents: Approximately 300 carriers that serve Tribal lands.
- (2) Frequency of Response: Annually.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 4 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 1,200 hours.

4 hours per respondent for 300 respondents filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is: 300 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 300 responses x 4 hours = **1,200 hours.**

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$48,000. (1,200 hours x \$40/hour.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each carrier serving Tribal lands will spend a total of at least 4 hours preparing, reviewing, and submitting its report on Tribal engagement: 300 (responses) x 4 (hours preparing, reviewing, and submitting report) x \$40 per hour = \$48,000.

**aa. Price Cap Carrier Frozen High Cost Support Certification (no revisions):**

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 293 price cap carriers receiving Connect America frozen support will have to certify that they are using incrementally increasing portions of their frozen support to deploy broadband-capable networks and to offer their own retail broadband service in areas substantially unserved by an unsubsidized competitor.

(2) Frequency of response: Annually.

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

(4) Estimated time per response: 15 hours.

(5) Total annual hour burden: 4,395 hours.

15 hours per respondent for 293 respondents filing annually. Total annual hour burden is: 293 respondents x 1 certification per respondent = 293 responses x 15 hours = **4,395 hours.**

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$175,800. (4,395 hours x \$40/hour.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each price cap carrier receiving frozen support will spend at least 15 hours confirming compliance and certifying that it is using incrementally increasing portions of its frozen support to deploy broadband-capable networks and to offer its own retail broadband service in areas substantially unserved by an unsubsidized competitor. 293 (responses) x 15 (hours to confirm and certify compliance) x \$40/hr. = \$175,800.

**bb. Price Cap Carrier High-Cost Support for Access Charges Certification (no revisions):**

(1) Number of respondents: Approximately 293 price cap carriers receiving high-cost support designed to offset access charges will have to certify that support received pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.304 in the prior calendar year was used to build and operate broadband-capable networks used to offer provider's own retail service in areas substantially unserved by an unsubsidized competitor.

- (2) Frequency of response: Annually.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 15 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 4,395 hours.

15 hours per respondent for 293 respondents filing annually. Total annual hour burden is: 293 respondents x 1 certification per respondent = 293 responses x 15 hours = **4,395 hours**.

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$175,800. (4,395 hours x \$40/hour.).
- (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each price cap carrier receiving support to offset reductions in access charges will spend at least 15 hours confirming compliance and certifying that it is using high-cost support received pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.304 to deploy broadband-capable networks and to offer its own retail broadband service in areas substantially unserved by an unsubsidized competitor. 293 (responses) x 15 (hours to confirm and certify compliance) x \$40/hr. = \$175,800.

**cc. Privately Held Rate-of-Return Carrier Financial Information (no revisions):**

- (1) Number of respondents: Approximately 625 privately held rate-of-return carriers will be required to submit financial statements.
- (2) Frequency of response: Annually.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 15 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 9,375 hours.

15 hours per respondent for 625 respondents filing annually. Total annual hour burden is: 625 respondents x 1 financial statement per respondent = 625 responses x 15 hours = **9,375 hours**.

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$375,000. (9,375 hours x \$40/hour.).
- (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each privately held rate-of-return carrier will spend at least 15 hours filing its RUS Operating Report for Telecommunications Borrowers, audited financial statements, or financial statements reviewed by a certified public accountant. 625 (responses) x 15 (hours to prepare and submit financial statements) x \$40/hr. = \$375,000.

**dd. Residential Rate Updates (no revisions):**

- (1) Number of respondents: Fewer than 20 carriers that have rates falling below the rate floor and make adjustments to their rates in the course of the year will file an update.
- (2) Frequency of response: On occasion.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 4 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 80 hours.

4 hours per respondent for 20 respondents filing occasionally. Total annual hour burden is: 20 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 20 responses x 4 hours = **80 hours**.

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$3,200. (80 hours x \$40/hour.).
- (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each carrier that files a residential rate update will spend at least 4 hours reporting its rates. 20 (responses) x 4 (hours to gather and report rates) x \$40/hr. = \$3,200.

**ee. State Certification Letter Under 254(e) (no revisions):**

- (1) Number of respondents: 61 respondents. (51 states, plus approximately 10 carriers will have to file this certification).
- (2) Frequency of response: Annual reporting requirement. Each state commission must file a letter with the Commission certifying that a carrier within the state had accounted for its receipt of federal support in its rates or otherwise used the support for the “provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended” in accordance with section 254(e). Carriers that are not under a state regulatory authority will have to file with the Commission directly.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 3 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 183 hours.

Total annual hour burden is: 61 respondents x 1 certification per respondent = 61 responses x 3 hours = **183 hours**.

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$7,320. (183 hours x \$40/hr.).

- (7) Explanation of calculation. We estimate that each respondent will spend 3 hours complying with this requirement. 61 (responses) x 3 (hours to confirm compliance and prepare certification letter) x \$40/hr. = \$7,320.

**ff. Support in Competitive Study Areas: (FCC Form 525) (modified to exclude Alaska Plan participants):**

- (1) Number of respondents: 1. One tribally owned competitive ETC will have to submit line count data quarterly. Competitive ETCs participating in the Alaska Plan are no longer subject to this requirement.
- (2) Frequency of response: Quarterly reporting requirement. Each carrier must file line count data with USAC upon competitive entry in rural carrier study areas.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 4.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 6 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 24 hours.

Total annual hour burden is: 1 respondent x 4 reports per respondent = 4 responses x 6 hours = **24 hours.**

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$960. (24 hours x \$40/hr.).
- (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that 1 competitive ETCs will submit line count data quarterly, x 6 hours to complete x \$40/hr. when preparing the worksheet. 4 (responses) x 6 (hours to prepare line count data worksheet) x \$40/hour = \$960.

**gg. Safety Valve (no revisions):**

- (1) Number of respondents: 25 rural carriers will have to file a notice.
- (2) Frequency of response: On occasion reporting requirement and third party disclosure requirement. Rural carriers shall provide written notice to USAC when their index year has been established for purposes of calculating eligibility for safety valve support.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: .5 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 13 hours.

Total annual hour burden is: 25 respondents x 1 notice per respondent = 25 responses x .5 hours = 13 hours (rounded up).

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$520. (13 hours x \$40/hr.).
- (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each carrier will spend .5 hour drafting a notice to USAC indicating when their index year has been established for purposes of calculating eligibility for safety valve support. 25 (responses) x .5 (hours to prepare notice) = 13 (rounded up) x \$40/hr. = \$520.

**hh. Local End User Rates and State Regulated Fees (no revisions):**

- (1) Number of respondents: Fewer than 1,434 companies (1,141 rate-of-return carriers and 293 price cap carriers) will have to report local end user rates and state regulated fees.
- (2) Frequency of response: Annually. Each carrier must file the Rate Floor Data Collection Form with USAC. Among other information, the form contains all local end user rates that fall below a specified urban rate floor and the number of lines associated with each rate. Mid-year updates are permitted.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 4 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 5,736 hours.

4 hours per respondent for 1,434 respondents filing on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is: 1,434 respondents x 1 report per respondent = 1,434 responses x 4 hours = **5,736 hours**.

- (6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$229,440. (5,736 hours x \$40/hour.).
- (7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each carrier will spend at least 4 hours filtering and tabulating end user rates for each line that falls below a specified urban rate floor and indicating the specific line associated with each rate. 1,434 (responses) x 4 (hours to tabulate end user rates for each line and to prepare the relevant reporting documents) x \$40/hr. = \$229,440.

**ii. Recordkeeping Requirements (no revisions):**

- (1) Number of Respondents: Approximately 1,857 telephone companies.
- (2) Frequency of Response: Annually.
- (3) Total number of responses per respondent: Approximately 1.
- (4) Estimated time per response: 2 hours.
- (5) Total annual hour burden: 3,714 hours.

2 hours per respondent for 1,857 respondents retaining documents on an annual basis. Total annual hour burden is: 1,857 respondents x 1 submission per respondent = 1,857 responses x 2 hours = **3,714 hours**.

(6) Total estimate of in-house cost to respondents: \$148,560. (3,714 hours x \$40/hour.).

(7) Explanation of calculation: We estimate that each carrier will spend at least 2 hours tracking document retention periods. 1,857 (responses) x 2 (hours to comply with document retention requirements) x \$40 per hour = \$148,560.

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

<b>Information Collection Requirements</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Responses Per Year</b>	<b>Estimated Time per Response (hours)</b>	<b>Total Burden Hours</b>	<b>In-house Cost to Respondents</b>
<b><u>a. Newly Available Backhaul Reporting for Alaska Plan Participants</u></b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>\$5,880</b>
<b><u>b. Capital Expenditure Documentation for Rate-of-Return and Competitive ETC Alaska Plan Participants</u></b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>\$1,040</b>

<b><u>c. Reporting of New Locations by Connect America Fund-Broadband Loop Support (CAF-BLS) Recipients</u></b>	485	1	3	1,455	\$58,200
<b><u>d. Connect America Fund Phase II Requirements</u></b>	9	1	2	18	\$720
<b><u>e. Rate-of-Return Carrier Requirements</u></b>	1,141	1	3	3,423	\$136,920
<b><u>f. Reasonably Comparable Rates Certification for Broadband</u></b>	1,182	1	4	4,728	\$189,120
<b><u>g. Additional Annual Reporting for Rural Broadband Experiments</u></b>	20	1	3	60	\$2,400
<b><u>h. Annual Reporting Requirements for All Funding Recipients</u></b>	1,877	1	5	9,385	\$375,400
<b><u>i. Carriers Lacking Terrestrial Backhaul Certification</u></b>	20	1	15	300	\$12,000



<b><u>j. Phase I Investment Annual Milestone Reports</u></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b><u>k. Connect America Phase I Incremental Support Acceptance</u></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b><u>l. Connect America Phase I Incremental Support Certification</u></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b><u>m. Changes in Phase I Deployments</u></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b><u>n. Connect America Phase I Certifications</u></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b><u>o. Geocoded Information for Phase I Two- and Three-Year Milestone Reports</u></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b><u>p. Broadband Initiatives Program/Broadband Technology Opportunities Program Annual Milestone Reports</u></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

<b><u>q. Connect America Phase II Challenges and Responses (FCC Form 505)</u></b>	0	0	0	0	\$0
<b><u>r. Validation of CAF-BLS Cost and Revenue, filed in response to the Administrator's request for further validation</u></b>	100	100	4	400	\$16,000.00
<b><u>s. CAF-BLS Line Counts (FCC Form 507)</u></b>	1,132	1	6	6,792	\$271,680
<b><u>t. Projected CAF-BLS Cost and Revenue Data (Rate-of-Return Carriers) (FCC Form 508)</u></b>	766	1	2	1,532	\$61,280
<b><u>u. Projected CAF-BLS Cost and Revenue Data (Average Schedule Carriers) (FCC Form 508)</u></b>	366	1	1	366	\$14,640
<b><u>v. CAF-BLS Actual Cost and Revenue Data (Annually) (FCC Form 509)</u></b>	766	1	4	3,064	\$122,560
<b><u>w. CAF-BLS True-Ups (Average Schedule Carriers) (FCC Form 509)</u></b>	366	1	1	366	\$14,640

<b><u>x. Capital Operating Expense Data for Phase II Model-Based Support Recipients</u></b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>\$360</b>
<b><u>y. E-Rate Certification for Phase II Model- Based Support Recipients and Rate-of-Return Carrier High-Cost Recipients</u></b>	<b>1,150</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2,300</b>	<b>\$92,000</b>
<b><u>z. Tribal Engagement Reporting</u></b>	<b>300</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>\$48,000</b>
<b><u>aa. Price Cap Carrier Frozen High Cost Support Certification</u></b>	<b>293</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4,395</b>	<b>\$175,800</b>
<b><u>bb. Price Cap Carrier High-Cost Support for Access Charges Certification</u></b>	<b>293</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4,395</b>	<b>\$175,800</b>
<b><u>cc. Privately Held Rate-of-Return Carrier Financial Information</u></b>	<b>625</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9,375</b>	<b>\$375,000</b>
<b><u>dd. Residential Rate Updates</u></b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>\$3,200</b>

<b><u>ee. State Certification Letter Under 254(e)</u></b>	<b>61</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>\$7,320</b>
<b><u>ff. Support in Competitive Study Areas (FCC Form 525)</u></b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>\$960</b>
<b><u>gg. Safety Valve</u></b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>\$520</b>
<b><u>hh. Local End User Rates and State Regulated Fees</u></b>	<b>1,434</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5,736</b>	<b>\$229,440</b>
<b><u>ii. Recordkeeping Requirements</u></b>	<b>1,857</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3,714</b>	<b>\$148,560</b>

**TOTALS:**

**Total Number of Respondents: 1,877 unique respondents filing multiple times.**

**Total Number of Responses Annually: 14,335**

**Total Annual Hourly Burden for requirements (a) – (cc): 63,486**

**Total Annual In-house Costs to respondents: \$2,539,440.00**

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 to respondents.

14. *Estimates of the cost burden to the Commission.* There will be few, if any, costs to the Commission because notice and enforcement requirements are already part of Commission duties. Moreover, there will be minimal cost to the federal government since an outside party will administer this program.
15. *Program changes or adjustments.* The Commission is reporting program changes to this information collection as a result of new requirements associated with the new Alaska Plan, providing support in exchange for obligations tailored to each Alaskan carrier's circumstances; eliminating and streamlining existing high-cost reporting requirements; changing circumstances making certain reporting obligations no longer applicable under the FCC's rules; updating the burden calculations to reflect the move of a reporting obligation from this information collection into OMB control number 3060-1228, Connect America Fund – High Cost Portal Filing; and moving certain reporting requirements from this information collection into OMB control number 3060-0233, Part 54 – High Cost Loop Support Reporting to National Exchange Carrier Association (NECA). The estimated total number of respondents, total annual responses and annual burden hours have therefore been reduced under this OMB control number.

The total number of respondents decreased from 1,948 to 1,877 (-71); the total annual responses increased from 14,020 to 14,335 (+315); and the total annual burden hours decreased from 242,585 to 63,486 (-179,099).

16. *Collections of information whose results will be published.* The Commission plans to make some non-proprietary information available publicly, including information included in recipients' annual reports.
17. *Display of expiration date for OMB approval of information collection.* The Commission seeks continued approval to not display the OMB expiration date on FCC Form 481 and FCC Form 525. The Commission will use an edition date in lieu of an OMB expiration date. This is necessary so that when the OMB expiration date changes, the Commission does not have to update electronic versions or destroy paper stocks. Finally, the Commission publishes a list of all OMB-approved information collections, including this one, in 47 C.F.R. § 0.408.
18. *Exceptions to certification statement for Paperwork Reduction Act submissions.* There are no 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.