

BEFORE THE NEW MEXICO PUBLIC REGULATION COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF	)	
MESCALERO APACHE TELECOM, INC.	)	Docket No. _____
FOR SUPPORT FROM THE NEW MEXICO	)	
RURAL UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND	)	
	)	
MESCALERO APACHE TELECOM, INC.,	)	
	)	
Petitioner,	)	
_____	)	

DIRECT TESTIMONY

GODFREY ENJADY

MESCALERO APACHE TELECOM, INC.

August 26, 2026

NMPRC Docket No. _____
Direct Testimony of Godfrey Enjady

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I. INTRODUCTION

Q. Please state your name and current employment status

A. My name is Godfrey Enjady, and I am employed as General Manager of Mescalero Apache Telecom, Inc. (MATI), 75 Carrizo Canyon Road, Mescalero, New Mexico, 88340. MATI is a wholly owned enterprise of the Mescalero Apache Tribe, and has been providing communications services on the reservation since 2000.

Q. Please describe your current responsibilities with MATI.

A. As the General Manager, I am responsible for the day-to-day operations of MATI, the long term strategic direction of the company, and ensuring the Mescalero Apache Tribe's sovereign interests are maintained.

In addition, I serve as the President of the National Tribal Telecommunications Association (NTTA), a group of Tribally-owned communications providers, and I am the Chair of the New Mexico Office of Broadband Expansion (OBAE) Tribal Working Group.

Q. Please describe your business experience and background in the telecommunications industry.

A. I have a strong telecommunications background in both regulatory and technical aspects. For the past 27 years since its inception, I have served as General Manager of MATI including overseeing the overall operations of the company including both Federal and State regulatory matters. I have provided consulting services for the startup of many Tribes

1 across the United States for the startup of their own utility companies. I am currently
2 affiliated with the following entities and organizations:

- 3 • FCC Native Nations Communications Task Force
- 4 • Connect New Mexico Council
- 5 • NM PRC Broadband Task Force
- 6 • NM PRC Tribal Advisory Council
- 7 • Northern Cheyenne Communications Corporation Board
- 8 • Member of WTA – Advocates for Rural Broadband (formerly the Western
- 9 Telecommunications Alliance)
- 10 • Chairman of the WTA’s Tribal Affairs Committee
- 11 • Past member of NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association Board of Directors
- 12

13 I have in the past, also served as a Member of the Federal Communications Commission’s
14 Intergovernmental Advisory Committee and Native Nations Broadband Task Force.

15
16 **Q. Have you previously testified before the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission?**

17 A. No, I have not.

18
19 **II. Purpose of Testimony**

20 **Q. What is the purpose of your testimony in this proceeding?**

21 A. The purpose of my testimony is to describe MATI’s operations, historical and recent
22 network deployment and improvement activities, and supplement Mr. Barron’s testimony
23 on MATI’s need for additional New Mexico State Rural Universal Service Fund (SRUSF)
24 support.

25
26 **Q. Please summarize your testimony.**

27 A. MATI is requesting need-based support from the SRUSF program. Specifically, Section
28 63-9H-6(N) of the RTA and 17.11.10.25 NMAC allow an Eligible Telecommunications

1 Carrier (ETC) serving rural areas of the state to petition the PRC for support from the
2 SRUSF based on need, and where such support is needed to ensure the widespread
3 availability and affordability of universal service in the rural areas of the state served by
4 the ETC.

5
6 My testimony will describe the steps MATI has taken to deliver 100% fiber-based service
7 to the reservation, how support is still needed to ensure this network is sustained, and that
8 additional sources of revenue have been exhausted. In this way, I will also explain why
9 MATI's request in the public interest.

10
11 **Q. How much additional support is MATI requesting?**

12 A. MATI believes it can demonstrate a need for \$1,165,442 in annual need-based SRUSF
13 support based on the methodology described below. MATI requests that this level of
14 support be paid for the next five years.

15
16 **III. MATI's History**

17 **Q. Please discuss MATI's history.**

18 A. MATI was formed by the Mescalero Apache Tribe in 1999 for the purpose of the acquisition
19 and operation of a telecommunications system that was at the time owned by GTE. MATI
20 acquired the GTE assets related to areas on the Mescalero Apache Reservation, which
21 included the entire Mescalero exchange, the portions of the Ruidoso and Alto exchanges
22 located on the Reservation, and the portion of the Alto exchange located on the United
23 States Forest Service property serving the Ski Apache resort operated by the Tribe.

MATI's acquisition of the GTE assets was approved by the PRC on August 15, 2000.¹ In that same Order, the PRC designated MATI as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) pursuant to Section 214(e)(2) of the federal Telecommunications Act.²

Once MATI was in operation, it worked to ensure all members of the reservation had access to, first, telephone service, and then broadband internet access service. Since then, and through millions of dollars of investment, in part aided by federal loan and grant programs, MATI is now serving 100% of the Reservation with fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) service.

Q. Please briefly describe MATI's ongoing investment efforts.

A. MATI is currently in the midst of a Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP) grant-funded project that provided over \$43 million for various activities, including construction of a new Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system (SCADA), outside plant design, engineering, underground and aerial construction, shelter installation, tower construction, and equipment configuration, as well as installing a new network operations center (NOC) and a new data center.

IV. Need for Additional SRUSF Support

Q. Considering that MATI is fully deployed with fiber-to-the-home technology, please describe MATI's need for additional SRUSF support.

¹ Utility Case No. 3364, Final Order issued August 15, 2000

² 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(2)

1 A. MATI, being fully FTTH deployed, is not seeking SRUSF support for deployment
2 activities. Instead, and as described in detail in Mr. Barron's testimony, MATI is seeking
3 support based on need, as allowed for by the New Mexico Rural Telecommunications Act
4 (RTA) and implementing rules adopted by the PRC. MATI's need for support, as measured
5 by its intrastate revenue requirement and revenue deficiency, is instead based on the
6 ongoing operations, maintenance, and upgrades related to its deployment broadband
7 network. In other words, MATI's need for additional SRUSF support is needed to ensure
8 the affordability and widespread, continuing, availability of telecommunications and
9 broadband services.

10
11 **Q. Please describe, in greater detail, MATI's need for additional SRUSF support as it**
12 **relates to the affordability of services.**

13 A. MATI serves the residents living on and businesses located within the Mescalero Apache
14 Reservation. The residents, especially, are very sensitive to the affordability of services. A
15 look at the demographic data of the Reservation as compared to the United States as a
16 whole puts this in perspective.

17
18 According to the latest American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year data, the Mescalero
19 Apache Reservation, which covers 719.2 square miles, has a population of 3,590 living in
20 890 households. The per capita income on the reservation is \$20,754, which is one-third of
21 the state of New Mexico, and about half of the United States as a whole. Furthermore,
22 28.7% of the population is below the poverty line, compared with 16.4% for New Mexico
23 and 12.5% for the United States as a whole.

1
2 In practical terms, this means that MATI must offer services at rates affordable to the
3 Reservation's population. To demonstrate this need for affordability, in May 2026, 415
4 households on the Reservation qualified for support from the federal Lifeline program, or
5 nearly 62% of total residential customers. The federal program offers credits for voice and
6 broadband service of up to \$34.25 per month for qualifying customers living in Tribal
7 areas. During this period, the FCC determined that a reasonably comparable (i.e.,
8 affordable) rate for voice service was \$61.29 and for 100/20 Mbps broadband internet
9 access service was \$96.46 (unlimited data). Thus, there is a mismatch between what costs
10 for service are deemed reasonable, and what the most vulnerable in our community receive
11 as support for utilizing these vital services.

12
13 The only source of cost recovery on the intrastate side is, or soon will be³, local rates and
14 state universal service fund support. Thus, MATI is looking to the SRUSF need-based
15 support mechanism to ensure services remain available and affordable – at least into the
16 near future.

17
18 **V. MATI's Use of SRUSF Support**

19 **Q. Please describe MATI's planned use of the additional need-based support, and how**
20 **this use is consistent with 17.11.10.25(B) and 17.11.10.27 NMAC.**

21 **A.** MATI will utilize any awarded SRUSF need-based support for operating and maintaining
22 its network that is used to provide universal service on the Reservation. MATI will not, in

³ See Mr. Barron's Direct Testimony for a discussion of proposed changes by the FCC to federal support mechanisms

1 large part, use this additional support to deploy its network to serve customers. As stated
2 above, MATI has deployed a FTTH network to 100% of the Reservation and thus plans on
3 using need-based support to help operate and maintain its network, which will help ensure
4 (1) the widespread availability of universal service, and (2) the affordability of services
5 provided. Both of these uses of support are consistent with the requirements contained in
6 17.11.10.25(B) NMAC and 17.11.10.27 NMAC.

7
8 **Q. How will MATI utilize any need-based support resulting from this petition to ensure**
9 **the widespread availability of universal service?**

10 A. Even with a fully-deployed FTTH network, there are still substantial amounts of operations
11 and maintenance costs necessary to provide services to customers. For example, there are
12 costs required to ensure the network is operating fully and is providing the technical means
13 to connect customers to the wider communications network. These costs include labor
14 related to technicians to check and, when necessary, repair fiber cables; vehicle
15 maintenance and upkeep due to the rugged terrain, costly central office switching and
16 transmission maintenance contracts, computer and information technology (IT)
17 maintenance, customer service personnel labor costs; and costs related to the ongoing
18 management of the network and related services.

19
20 **Q. How will the need-based support received by MATI be used to ensure the widespread**
21 **affordability of universal services?**

22 A. As I explained above, MATI has two basic options for recovering the cost of providing
23 services: end user charges and universal service support. End user charges include those

1 for services to residential, business, special access, and other customers. Rates for these
2 services are typically constrained by regulations, competition, or affordability. In MATI's
3 case, the opportunity for recovering costs via service charges to businesses is limited, and
4 thus must look to its residential customer base. But, and as I discuss above, the residents
5 of the Mescalero Apache Reservation are less able to afford higher than average rates due
6 to higher than average poverty levels and lower per-capita income. Thus, the extreme
7 importance of universal service support for providers like MATI that serve high-cost rural
8 Tribal areas that would otherwise lack an economic case for service.

9
10 **Q. Has MATI considered other forms of funding to assist with the deployment,**
11 **operations, and maintenance of its network in New Mexico?**

12 A. Yes, MATI has, over time, utilized federal loan and grant funding from the Rural Utilities
13 Service (RUS) and most recently received a \$43 million grant from the TBCP (round 1)
14 administered by NTIA. The work related to the TBCP grant is ongoing and has been
15 delayed by various state and federal permitting and right-of-way issues. Given this, and the
16 fact that MATI has in essence deployed a FTTH network to 100% of the serviceable
17 locations on the reservation, available federal grant funding is minimal.

18
19 **VI. MATI's Request for Additional Support is in the Public Interest**

20 **Q. Please explain how MATI's request for additional SRUSF support based on need is in**
21 **the public interest.**

22 A. Overall, MATI's request for additional SRUSF support is in the public interest because it
23 will assist MATI in continuing the vital operations and maintenance activities necessary

1 for sustaining its fiber-based broadband network deployed on the Reservation. Without this
2 additional support, MATI's ability to continue offering services at affordable rates would
3 be in jeopardy, in contradiction with the PRC's initial grant of operating authority.⁴
4

5 In addition, MATI has deployed its fiber-based network on the Reservation using a mix of
6 federal, state, and internally-generated funds. Given this, it is in the public interest to
7 provide additional SRUSF support based on the need demonstrated in MATI's petition and
8 accompanying testimony, or the funding provided for over 25 years will go to waste.
9

10 **Q. Are there any other public interest issues you would like to raise?**

11 A. Yes. Support received by incumbent ETCs in New Mexico is largely limited to Access
12 Reduction Support (ARS)⁵, with Sacred Wind Communications receiving comparable
13 carrier support.⁶ The purpose of ARS was to provide for revenue-neutral intrastate access
14 rate rebalancing, meaning carriers required to reduce intrastate access rates were provided
15 with ARS as an offset. ARS, while vital at the time, does not directly relate to the level of
16 support necessary to sustain deployed networks.
17

18 MATI notes that of the reported \$16 million in ARS being distributed annually, over 50%
19 of the funding goes to two carriers. Conversely, MATI's current ARS support of
20 approximately \$142,000 represents less than 1% of the total annual ARS disbursements.

⁴ Utility Case No. 3364, Final Order issued August 15, 2000 at p. 32 (Findings and Conclusions #7) "Granting to MATI a Certificate of Financial and Technical Competency and a Certificate of Operating Authority is in the public interest."

⁵ NMSA Section 63-9H-6, Subsection K

⁶ *Id.*, Subsection N

1 While this was a reasonable policy when it was adopted, it makes more sense to ensure
2 carriers are receiving SRUSF support related to actual need to either deploy broadband
3 networks or, as in MATI's case, to help sustain such networks.

4
5 Based on the above, I believe the public interest is met in relation to MATI's request for
6 additional, need-based, SRUSF support as it is supported by MATI's actual, current,
7 circumstances.

8
9 **Q. Does that conclude your testimony?**

10 **A.** Yes it does.

