

**ECONOMIC SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
WTAP Implementation Issues**



2016 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

Request	FY16	FY17	15-17
FTE	3.3	0.0	1.7
GF-State	\$608,000	\$0	\$608,000
Total	\$608,000	\$0	\$608,000

DECISION PACKAGE SUMMARY

The Economic Services Administration (ESA) requests 3.3 FTEs and \$608,000 GF-State to extend the termination date of the Washington Telephone Services Assistance (WTAP) program. By funding this request, ESA will continue to provide local telephone subsidies to eligible families until August 31, 2015 in order to allow proper notice of termination and provide assistance to clients as they transition to the federal Lifeline program until November 2015.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The 2015-17 Biennium budget eliminated WTAP with an assumed effective date of June 30, 2015. Due to the late passage of the budget and notification requirements for the program, ESA was unable to end WTAP by the end of June 2015.

WAC 388-458-0030 requires that ESA give notice to WTAP recipients ten days prior to the termination of the benefit. WAC 480-120-194 requires that telephone companies give notices to individual customers thirty days prior to telephone rate changes. Because of the notice requirements, ESA could not terminate the program until the end of August 2015.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

ESA requests funding for costs related to maintaining the service until August 31, 2015 and complete shutdown of the program. ESA ended WTAP services on August 31, 2015. However, it requires funding and 5.5 FTE to operate the program through August 2015. It is assumed that WTAP clients will need assistance in the transition to the federal Lifeline program. Assisting clients in this transition will require 5.5 FTE for 5 months after the program ends, which totals 3.3 FTE over a 12 month period.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Funding this decision package will allow ESA to provide telephone subsidies until proper notifications can be sent and staff can continue assisting clients until the program is fully closed out.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACT

This request will enable ESA and the telephone companies to meet the notice time frame as required by WAC 388-458-0030 and WAC 480-120-194. With required notifications in place, ESA does not expect stakeholders will have concerns.



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DSHS VALUES

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