

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

LeRoy Koppendrayner
Marshall Johnson
Ken Nickolai
Phyllis A. Reha
Gregory Scott

Chair
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner

In the Matter of DOC/TAM's FY 2004
Proposed Budget and Surcharge
Recommendation

ISSUE DATE: January 30, 2004

DOCKET NO. P-999/CI-03-491

ORDER APPROVING CHANGE IN
BUDGET LINE ITEM

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On June 16, 2003, the Commission issued an Order under Minn. Stat. § 237.52, subd. 2, approving the 2004 fiscal year budget submitted by the Department of Commerce's Telecommunications Access Minnesota (TAM) program.¹ That budget included a line item funding a trial program to provide captioned telephone service (CapTel service) to eligible participants.

On January 15, 2004, the TAM program made a letter-filing seeking permission to add \$186,835 to the CapTel budget line item, stating that the results of the trial demonstrated CapTel's value, especially in meeting the needs of late-deafened persons and those with significant but not total hearing loss. The additional funds would permit TAM to extend the program through the end of the budget cycle and to expand it to include everyone who would benefit from it. The letter-filing proposed that funds for other line items in the TAM budget showing projected surpluses be transferred to the CapTel line, eliminating any need for a budget increase.

TAM requested immediate action on its request because its contract with the CapTel vendor was set to expire on January 31, which would leave current program participants without the assistive technology on which they had come to depend.

The Commission took up the letter-filing on January 29, 2004.

¹ *Order Approving Proposed Budget, Increasing Surcharge, and Requesting Report*, this docket, June 16, 2003.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Department of Commerce, through its TAM program, seeks approval of this budget adjustment on grounds that it will permit the agency to fulfill its mission more effectively, with no net effect on amounts budgeted to fund that mission. The Commission will approve the budget adjustment, deferring to the specialized expertise of the agency to whom the Legislature has committed responsibility for making Minnesota's telecommunications network accessible to communication-impaired persons.

The Commission will so order.

ORDER

1. The Commission approves the transfer of \$186,835 to the CapTel budget line item from other line items in the budget approved for the Telecommunications Access Minnesota program on June 16, 2003.
2. This Order shall become effective immediately.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Burl W. Haar
Executive Secretary

(S E A L)

This document can be made available in alternative formats (i.e., large print or audio tape) by calling (651) 297-4596 (voice) or 1-800-627-3529 (TTY relay service).