



## PUC commission staff proposes uses for Qwest funds

*Case No. GNR-T-16-04, Order No. 33520*

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**BOISE (May 10, 2016)** – The Idaho Public Utilities Commission is taking comment on a commission staff proposal on how best to disburse about \$90,000 remaining in a commission-maintained Qwest Corporation compliance account that has not been operative since 2010.

Qwest, the predecessor company to what is now CenturyLink, paid into the fund when it failed to meet performance standards designed to ensure that other telecommunications providers were allowed access to Qwest facilities to provide competitive telecommunications services.

Commission staff is proposing that \$44,900 be allocated to the Idaho Department of Health & Welfare's Suicide Prevention Action Network. Staff is also proposing that \$44,910 be allocated toward the Police Officer Standards & Training Academy (POST) for the employment, training and certification of E-911 emergency dispatchers.

The commission is taking public comment on the proposals through May 26.

Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for Idahoans ages 15-34. Idaho's overall suicide rate is 52 percent higher than the national average and double the national average for youths ages 10-19. To address this priority at-risk age group, the Suicide Prevention Hotline proposes to launch a new service called "Texts for Life," to reach people more comfortable texting or using an on-line chat service. While the new service would be open to all ages, the focus is on support for youths and others who favor these technologies, including veterans. The new money will improve the hotline's capacity to handle several thousand text messages as well as chats and calls from those in crisis.

The allocation to POST would pay for about four years (at about \$10,000 a year) to fully develop the certification program required for emergency dispatchers at "911" centers while other funding solutions are identified.

Comments are accepted by accessing the commission's Website at [www.puc.idaho.gov](http://www.puc.idaho.gov) and clicking on "Case Comment Form," under the "Consumers" heading. Fill in the case number (GNR-T-16-04) and enter your comments. Comments can also be mailed to P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0074 or faxed to (208) 334-3762. The application and other documents related to this case are available on the commission's Website. Click on "Open Cases" under the "Telecommunications" heading and scroll down to the case number above.

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