

**STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA**  
**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

**Absaraka Cooperative Telephone Company, Inc.**  
**2020 High-Cost Universal Service Support**  
**Annual Report**

**Case No. PU-20-73**

**STAFF RESPONSE TO APPLICATION FOR PROTECTION OF INFORMATION**

On June 15, 2020, Absaraka Cooperative Telephone Company, Inc. (the company) filed an application for a protective order under North Dakota Administrative Code Section 69-02-09 for protecting against public disclosure protected information as defined by North Dakota Century Code Section 47-25.1-01(4).

The information which the Company requests be considered trade secret/confidential is the company's revenues from multiple sources, the amount and sources of the company's revenues which are part of ongoing litigation, based on the work product in the civil litigation, filed with the North Dakota Public Service Commission ("Commission") North Dakota Administrative Code Section 69-02-09-03 requires that the Commission staff examine the information and application and make a recommendation to the Commission.

Under N.D.C.C. 44-04-18.4(2)(d) the information which the company is requesting protection for qualifies as "trade secret" as it is information that is compiled that would derive independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons that can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use; and is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain the secrecy of the information.

Staff believes that the application satisfies the requirements of the North Dakota Century Code for protection of information, and that the information requested to be protected derives independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use; and is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy.

For reasons set forth above, Staff recommends that the Commission grant the application of the Company to protect certain information filed in this case.

Dated this 31<sup>st</sup> day of March 2022.



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