

Regulation of Broadband

**Joint Committee on Information
Management and Technology**

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Oregon Public Utility Commission**

PUC Overview

- Economic regulator of investor-owned utilities:
 - Electric – PGE, PacifiCorp, and Idaho Power
 - Natural Gas – NW Natural, Cascade, and Avista
 - Select telecom and small water companies
- Broader role in safety and emergency support
- Quasi-judicial and policy functions
- 3 full-time Commissioners - 142 FTE

Our **mission** is to ensure Oregonians have access to **safe, reliable and fairly priced** utility services that advance **state policy** and promote the **public interest**.

We use an **inclusive process** to evaluate differing viewpoints and visions of the public interest and arrive at **balanced, well-reasoned, independent decisions** supported by fact and law.

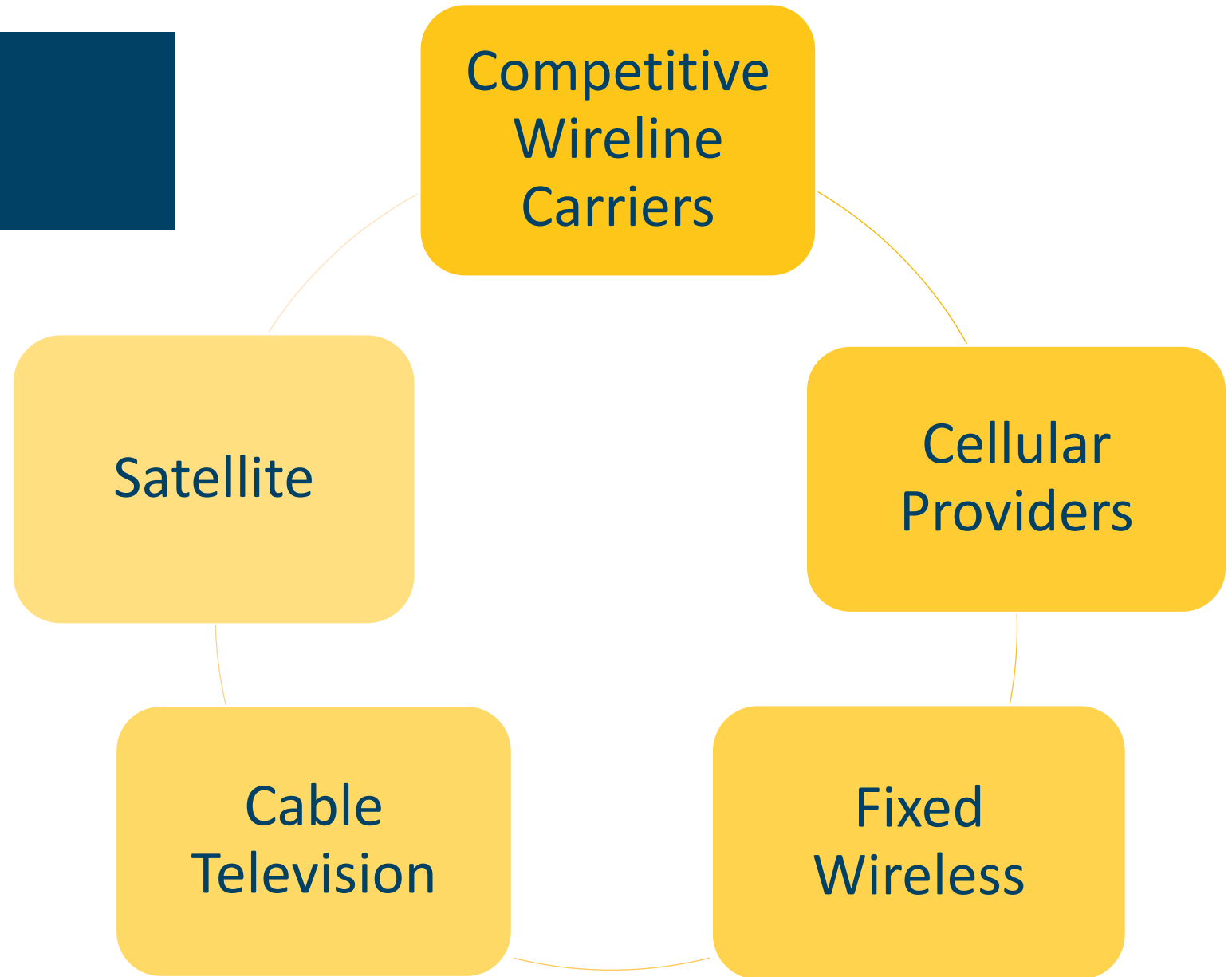
Understanding Regulatory Framework

- PUC charged with regulating “telecommunications utilities” and provision of “telecommunication services”

“Telecommunications Utilities”	=	Landline / Wireline Carriers
“Telecommunications Services”	=	Transport of voice communications

- Legal, technological, and commercial evolution has complicated this regulatory framework

Competition



Broadband

- High-speed internet access via wide bandwidth data transmission that can simultaneously transport multiple signals and traffic types
- Can be delivered via fiber, fixed wireless, cable, or satellite
- FCC classifies broadband as an “advanced telecommunications capability” and preempts state regulation
- PUC’s authority limited to voice telephony and does not extend to provisions of broadband, even when bundled with voice telephony

Oregon Efforts

OREGON BROADBAND OFFICE

Setting Oregon Up for Success in Improving
Broadband Access Across the State

- Legislation has made broadband access a state goal under [ORS 759.016\(1\)](#)
- Governor's Executive Order 18-31 created the Oregon Broadband Office (OBO) within the Oregon Business Development Department; passage of HB 2173 (2019) placed the OBO into statute.
- [SB 1603](#) (2020) created a pathway for the Oregon Residential Service Protection Fund to transfer up to \$5 million annually to the OBO.
- [HB 4092](#) (2022) Required PUC to investigate and report on feasibility of expanding the Oregon Telephone Assistance Program to support broadband internet access services – report due June 1, 2023

Questions?

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More Information:

oregon.gov/puc/utilities/Pages/Telecommunications.aspx

