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For immediate release

17-06

News Release

Georgia Audible Universal Information Access Service Will Be Operational June 1

Atlanta, May 31, 2006 – The Georgia Audible Universal Information Access Service (AUIAS) will be available to all blind and print disabled citizens on June 1, 2006. Under Georgia law, the Georgia Public Service Commission (Commission) is charged with the responsibility to manage and administer this program. Following an open and competitive bidding process, the Commission selected the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) to operate this service.

The AUIAS provides blind and print disabled citizens the opportunity to listen to newspapers and magazines by calling a toll free telephone number. To use the service, citizens must apply with the NFB and obtain a Personal Identification Number (PIN) to access the service, which is provided at no cost to eligible citizens. For information on the application process, call 1-866-316-3242 or e-mail at newsline@nfbga.org. The AUIAS, under the law, is funded through a monthly surcharge assessed on each telephone access line. Effective August 1, 2006, the monthly surcharge will be \$.05 per line. This surcharge also provides funding for the Georgia Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) and the Georgia Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (TEDP) for speech or hearing impaired Georgians.

Commission Chairman Stan Wise noted, "This service will be of great benefit to our blind and print disabled citizens and will provide the opportunity to receive the latest information from national print publications."

The NFB-NEWSLINE®, now the Georgia Audible Universal information Access Service, is more than just a way for blind and print disabled Georgian's to read newspapers and magazines," says Anil Lewis, President of the National Federation of the Blind of Georgia. It is the means by which we, the blind or print disabled citizens of Georgia, can finally access timely detailed information about our community and the world we live in so that we can be informed, participating, contributing members of society."

House Bill 669, approved by the 2005 Georgia General Assembly, established the AUIAS and provided for Commission oversight of the program and funding through the telephone access line surcharge. The law limits the cost of funding the program to no more than \$.01 per month per telephone line as part of the TRS monthly surcharge.

For more information on the AUIAS, citizens can call the NFB at 1-866-316-3242.

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