



June 13, 2023

Ex Parte Notice

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street, NE
Washington, DC 20554

RE: *Connect America Fund, WC Docket No. 10-90; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications, WC Docket No. 14-58; Telecommunications Carriers Eligible to Receive Universal Service Support, WC Docket No. 09-197; Connect America Fund – Alaska Plan, WC Docket No. 16-271; Expanding Broadband Service Through the A-CAM Program, RM-11868*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On Monday, June 12, 2023, the undersigned on behalf of NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association (“NTCA”) spoke with Danielle Thumann, legal advisor to Commissioner Brendan Carr, regarding matters in the above-referenced proceedings.

During the conversation, NTCA walked through its updated proposals for reform of the Connect America Fund-Broadband Loop Support (“CAF-BLS”) and High-Cost Loop Support (“HCLS”) mechanisms.¹ These updates build upon recommendations long articulated in the record,² but with targeted adjustments to reflect questions raised and the evolution of the record in these proceedings. NTCA asserted that these proposals would: (1) promote the delivery and sustainability of much higher-speed services in wider swaths of rural America; (2) offer a meaningful complement to comparable proposals to update the Alternative Connect America Cost Model; and (3) provide greater predictability and budgetary certainty than the mechanisms currently afford both to the Commission and to support recipients alike. NTCA observed the need to adopt these updates in the near-term to ensure effective coordination with broadband-related efforts underway at other agencies, while also emphasizing the critical necessity of recalibrating the baseline budget for CAF-BLS and HCLS at the current level of demand and enabling the phase-downs of fixed support under the proposal to accrue to the budget for non-electing providers as part of any offering of elections to take fixed support.

¹ *Ex Parte* Letter from Michael R. Romano, Executive Vice President, NTCA, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, Federal Communications Commission (the “Commission”), WC Docket No. 10-90, *et al.* (filed May 26, 2023).

² *See Ex Parte* Letter from Michael R. Romano, Executive Vice President, NTCA, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, Commission, WC Docket No. 10-90, *et al.* (filed Dec. 5, 2022); *Ex Parte* Letter from Michael R. Romano, Executive Vice President, NTCA, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, Commission, WC Docket No. 10-90, *et al.* (filed Oct. 14, 2022); Reply Comments of NTCA, WC Docket No. 10-90, *et al.* (filed Aug. 1, 2022); Comments of NTCA, WC Docket No. 10-90, *et al.* (filed July 18, 2022).

Marlene H. Dortch

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Thank you for your attention to this correspondence. Pursuant to Section 1.1206 of the Commission's rules, a copy of this letter is being filed via ECFS.

Sincerely,

/s/ Michael Romano

Michael Romano

Executive Vice President

cc: Danielle Thumann