



January 23, 2015

Ex Parte Notice

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: *Connect America Fund, WC Docket No. 10-90; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications, WC Docket No. 14-58*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

As the representative of nearly 900 independent, community-based telecommunications companies that are leading innovation in rural and small-town America, NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association has a substantial interest in the operations of the Rural Broadband Experiments specifically and efforts more generally to stimulate and sustain broadband investments in rural areas.

This letter is sent with reference to the petition for waiver filed recently by the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (“CFC”) and its affiliate, the Rural Telephone Finance Cooperative (“RTFC”). CFC and RTFC are nonprofit member-owned cooperative associations whose primary purpose is to provide their members with financing to supplement the loan programs of the United States Department of Agriculture’s Rural Utilities Service. RTFC in particular was formed to serve, and continues to serve, many of NTCA’s members.

NTCA offers its full and complete support of the request of CFC and RTFC to be included as an eligible financial institution to provide letters of credit for Federal Communications Commission programs. Including this worthy, reliable institution as an eligible provider of financial services helps to increase the options available to our members and thus, encourages their participation in programs such as the Rural Broadband Experiments. Many of RTFC’s members serve the most rural and impoverished areas of the United States. These areas are the ones most in need of more robust communications opportunities, and those smaller providers that have demonstrated time and again their commitment to serving such areas depend upon access to financial institutions such as RTFC to carry out their missions and deliver on the promise of universal service. Grant of the request from CFC and RTFC is therefore in the public interest.

Sincerely,

/s/ Michael R. Romano
Michael R. Romano
Senior Vice President – Policy