



April 21, 2016

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; Developing a Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime, CC Docket No. 01-92*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On Tuesday, April 19, 2016, the undersigned on behalf of NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association (“NTCA”) spoke separately via telephone with Amy Bender, legal advisor to Commissioner Michael O’Rielly, and Rebekah Goodheart, legal advisor to Commissioner Mignon Clyburn, respectively, to discuss the implementation and operation of budget controls under the recently released universal service fund (“USF”) reform order. The undersigned also held a similar conversation via telephone on Wednesday, April 20, 2016 with Stephanie Weiner, legal advisor to Chairman Tom Wheeler, and Carol Matthey, Alexander Minard, and Suzanne Yelen of the Wireline Competition Bureau (“Bureau”).

In each of these conversations, NTCA stressed the importance of sufficient USF budgets both to enable voluntary model elections and to ensure that the standalone broadband update recently adopted by the Federal Communications Commission (the “Commission”) will allow provision of services at reasonably comparable rates. NTCA also noted the need for equitable sharing of budget resources and fair application of any budget controls among all rural local exchange carriers (“RLECs”), so that each RLEC can build broadband to unserved areas as desired by the Commission regardless of individual support election. Finally, NTCA confirmed that each RLEC should be responsible for any consequences arising out of its own consideration of a potential election of support, rather than having the consequences of any one carrier’s decision spread across and among all other carriers. In the conversation with Ms. Weiner and Bureau staff, NTCA also discussed the scope of the progress reports with respect to five-year service quality improvement plans that will be due in July of this year, pending implementation of new reporting requirements pursuant to the recent reforms.

Marlene H. Dortch

April 21, 2016

Page 2 of 2

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 R. Romano

Michael R. Romano

Senior Vice President – Policy

cc: Stephanie Weiner
Rebekah Goodheart
Amy Bender
Carol Matthey
Alexander Minard
Suzanne Yelen