



May 16, 2016

***Ex Parte Notice***

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

**RE: *Amendments to Part 4 of the Commission’s Rules Concerning Disruptions to Communications, PS Docket No. 15-80; Proposed Extension of Part 4 of the Commission’s Rules Regarding Outage Reporting to Interconnected Voice Over Internet Protocol Service Providers and Broadband Internet Service Providers, PS Docket No. 11-82; New Part 4 of the Commission’s Rules Concerning Disruptions to Communications, ET Docket No. 04-35***

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On Friday, May 13, 2016, the undersigned on behalf of NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association (“NTCA”) along with Jesse Ward, Industry & Policy Analysis Manager for NTCA, met with Jessica Almond, legal advisor to Chairman Tom Wheeler to discuss the Part 4 Network Outage Reporting System (“NORS”) Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that will be discussed and voted upon at the upcoming May 25 open meeting.

During the meeting, NTCA stressed that many of the Commission’s proposals put forth in its Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in March 2015 would significantly increase the reporting burden on small carriers and consequently have a corresponding negative affect on their rural consumers. Further, the association noted that many of the current standards are functioning as intended and no additional reporting requirements are needed.

Specifically, the association urged the Commission to maintain the status quo in regard to the reporting requirements for simplex “outages,” wherein one circuit fails and traffic is diverted to a backup circuit or route. Under the current rules, carriers need to report if the outage lasts 5 days or more. Also, many factors contribute to restoration intervals, including access to customer sites, the availability of replacement equipment, and harsh weather. Reducing the reporting window is unlikely to cause carriers to invest additional resources to resolve these facilities any sooner, as carriers may be unable to do so given circumstances out of their control. Further, increasing the reporting requirement will result in a substantial increase in reports and administrative time, without serving any consumer interest or purpose.

Marlene H. Dortch

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

Sincerely,

/s/ Jill Canfield

Jill Canfield

Vice President of Legal & Industry,

Assistant General Counsel

NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association

cc: Jessica Almond