

**REDACTED – FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION**

January 31, 2018

John L. Flynn  
Tel 202 639-6007  
Fax 202 661-4967  
jflynn@jenner.com

**VIA ECFS**

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Room TW-A325  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Discounted Broadband Services Offer Condition Semi-Annual Report (Docket No. WC 16-197)

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Pursuant to the Federal Communications Commission's ("Commission" or "FCC") Memorandum Opinion and Order ("Order") in MB Docket No. 15-149, Charter Communications, Inc. ("Charter") hereby files the enclosed information required by Section VI.2(h) of Appendix B of the Order.<sup>1</sup>

Charter respectfully requests that, pursuant to Section 0.459 of the FCC's Rules,<sup>2</sup> the Commission withhold from public inspection and afford confidential treatment to the data being filed with this letter.

Section 552(b)(4) of the Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA Exemption 4") permits an agency to withhold from public disclosure any information that qualifies as "trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential."<sup>3</sup> Section 0.457(d)(2) of the Commission's Rules allows persons to file a request for non-disclosure when submitting materials that they wish withheld from public inspection.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Order, App'x B, § VI.2(h). In order to harmonize various reporting requirements under the Order, the reporting deadline for the first report was modified to July 31, 2017, with subsequent reports due every six months thereafter. See Letter from Madeleine Findley, Deputy Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau to John Flynn, Counsel for Charter Communications, Inc., DA 17-402 (filed Apr. 28, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> 47 C.F.R. § 0.459.

<sup>3</sup> 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4).

<sup>4</sup> 47 C.F.R. § 0.457(d)(2).

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In accordance with Section 0.459 of the Commission’s rules, Charter submits the following:

**(1) Identification of the specific information for which confidential treatment is sought.**<sup>5</sup> Charter requests confidential treatment of the data enclosed with this letter (“Submission”), as required by Section VI.2(h) of Appendix B of the Order.

**(2) Description of the circumstances giving rise to the submission.**<sup>6</sup> Charter submits this Submission in response to Section VI.2(h) of Appendix B of the Order.

**(3) Explanation of the degree to which the information is commercial or financial, or contains a trade secret or is privileged.**<sup>7</sup> The Submission contains commercially sensitive information that may be withheld from public disclosure under FOIA Exemption 4. The Commission has recognized that, for purposes of Exemption 4, “records are ‘commercial’ as long as the submitter has a commercial interest in them.”<sup>8</sup> In this regard, the Submission, which contains detailed information regarding Charter’s subscriber numbers and current estimates of households eligible to participate in Charter’s Discounted Broadband Services Offer, which constitutes sensitive “commercial” information that may be withheld under FOIA Exemption 4.

**(4) Explanation of the degree to which the information concerns a service that is subject to competition.**<sup>9</sup> The Submission contains proprietary and non-public information about Charter’s business operations of the type that has fallen under the Highly Confidential category in the proceeding underlying the Order.

**(5) Explanation of how disclosure of the information could result in substantial competitive harm.**<sup>10</sup> The Submission is confidential because its public release would likely cause competitive harm. Providing competitors and competing vendors with the information contained in the Submission would expose competitive and operational business information not ordinarily available to the public. The D.C. Circuit has found parties do not have to “show actual competitive harm” to justify confidential treatment.<sup>11</sup> Rather, “[a]ctual competition and the

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<sup>5</sup> *Id.* § 0.459(b)(1).

<sup>6</sup> *Id.* § 0.459(b)(2).

<sup>7</sup> *Id.* § 0.459(b)(3).

<sup>8</sup> *Robert J. Butler*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 6 FCC Rcd 5414 ¶ 12 (1991) (citing *Pub. Citizen Health Research Group v. F.D.A.*, 704 F.2d 1280, 1290 (D.C. Cir. 1983); *Am. Airlines v. Nat’l Mediation Bd.*, 588 F.2d 863, 868 (2d Cir. 1978)).

<sup>9</sup> 47 C.F.R. § 0.459(b)(4).

<sup>10</sup> *Id.* § 0.459(b)(5).

<sup>11</sup> *Pub. Citizen Health Research Grp.*, 704 F.2d at 1291 (quoting *Gulf & Western Indus. v. United States*, 615 F.2d 527, 530 (D.C. Cir. 1979)).

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likelihood of substantial competitive injury’ is sufficient to bring commercial information within the realm of confidentiality.”<sup>12</sup>

**(6) Identification of any measures taken by the submitting party to prevent unauthorized disclosure.**<sup>13</sup> Charter treats the information contained in the Submission as highly confidential; it has submitted this type of information in other proceedings under the Highly Confidential legend and has committed not to publicly disclose this information.

**(7) Identification of whether the information is available to the public and the extent of any previous disclosure of information to third parties.**<sup>14</sup> Charter has not previously disclosed the contents of the Submission to the public.

**(8) Justification of period during which the submitting party asserts that the material should not be available for public disclosure.**<sup>15</sup> Given the proprietary and non-public nature of the information in the Submission, Charter requests that confidential treatment apply indefinitely.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely

/s/ John L. Flynn

John L. Flynn

Enclosure (Redacted)

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<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

<sup>13</sup> 47 C.F.R. § 0.459(b)(6).

<sup>14</sup> *Id.* § 0.459(b)(7).

<sup>15</sup> *Id.* § 0.459(b)(8).