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October 15, 2018

**SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA ECFS**

Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Meeting Summary Per Section 1.1208 of the FCC's Rules  
Rural Health Care Support Mechanism, Docket No. 02-60

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of the Southwest Telehealth Access Grid (SWTAG), this *ex parte* memorializes the conference call between counsel for SWTAG and Commission staff. On October 12, 2018, the undersigned spoke with Liz Drogula, deputy division chief, Telecommunications Access Policy Division (TAPD), Wireline Competition Bureau, and Preston Wise, attorney-advisor in TAPD, regarding a Request for Review and Waiver filed by SWTAG.<sup>1</sup>

On the call, counsel for SWTAG summarized the substance of the pending Request for Review and Waiver. SWTAG requested an extension to respond to USAC questions in August 2017 about its 2017 applications for funding from the Healthcare Connect Fund. If USAC had granted a 14-day extension for all funding request inquiries, instead of the four-day extension it granted, SWTAG would have been able to respond to all of USAC's questions in a timely fashion. Given that SWTAG was working with USAC in good faith, it is not in the public interest for the Commission to deny \$17 million in funding due to the few days SWTAG needed to respond to USAC. Further, the delay in response did not affect the administration of the Rural Health Care program as commitments were issued in March 2018.

Counsel for SWTAG urged the Bureau to consider granting the appeal in a public notice so that the consortium could receive funding as soon as possible.

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<sup>1</sup> Request for Review and Waiver, *In the Matter of Rural Health Care Support Mechanism*, CC Docket No. 02-60, Southwest Telehealth Access Grid (filed March 16, 2018; supplement filed May 14, 2018).

Pursuant to Section 1.1206(b)(2) of the Commission's rules, an electronic copy of this letter is being filed for inclusion in the above-referenced docket and sent to Ms. Drogula and Mr. Wise. Please direct any questions regarding this filing to the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

*/s/ Gina Spade*

Gina Spade  
*Counsel for the Southwest Telehealth Access Grid*

cc: Liz Drogula (via email)  
Preston Wise (via email)