



Nez Perce

TRIBAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

P.O. BOX 305 • LAPWAI, IDAHO 83540 • (208) 843-2253

February 7, 2017

Marlene Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communication Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington DC 20554

RE: Nez Perce Tribes comments in the matter of application filed in the transfer of control of Level 3 Communications, Inc. to CenturyLink, Inc. WC Docket No. 16-403

Dear Secretary Dortch,

On behalf of the Nez Perce Tribe, located in North Central Idaho, I respectfully submit these comments on the above referenced application for transfer of control of Level 3 Communications, Inc. to CenturyLink, Inc. The Nez Perce Tribe urges the Commission to exercise its authority under the public interest standard of review to address the lack of access to affordable, modern broadband service on Tribal lands. The Nez Perce reservation is served in large part by CenturyLink. The Nez Perce Tribe has been diligently working towards bridging the gap in service to its residents for access to affordable high speed bandwidth.

The Merger Applicants focus on opportunities in metropolitan areas, international opportunities and with multi-location enterprise customers. Obviously these opportunities are not found in Indian Country and definitely not on the Nez Perce Reservation. Our concern is how this will affect the Nez Perce Tribe where CenturyLink is the carrier of last resort.

This merger risks lessening the incentive CenturyLink has to invest in their networks that serve Nez Perce Tribal lands. When CenturyLink acquired Qwest, CenturyLink assured the Commission that it was committed to universal broadband deployment, however under the current merger with Level 3 Communications, Inc., CenturyLink states only that existing regulatory obligations and commitments will be maintained.

The Nez Perce Tribe would like to ensure that the Commission proactively engage in constructive dialogue between the affected Tribal areas and CenturyLink to address the concerns

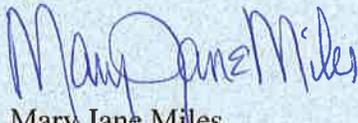
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of the Nez Perce Tribe. Although the Nez Perce Tribe doesn't oppose the merger, we would like to ensure the following are maintained and enforced through the merger;

- CenturyLink's commitment to meaningful engagement with Tribes
- CenturyLink commitment to use Connect America Fund (CAF) from merger to provide service in reservation areas

Ultimately what the Nez Perce Tribe would like to see is a set-aside of funds to provide broadband in Indian County through the merger. The Commission has an opportunity in this merger to help facilitate a dialogue that can address some of the concerns this merger raises and to also help ensure that the CAF funds be applied to the county locations identified through the auction are actually served based upon the plans submitted by CenturyLink.

Sincerely,



Mary Jane Miles  
Chairman