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September 18, 2017

Via Electronic Filing and Overnight Mail

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

Karen Majcher
Vice President, High Cost & Low Income Division
Universal Service Administrative Company
2000 L Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036
E-Mail: hccerts@usac.org

**Re: CC Docket No. 96-45/WC Docket No. 10-90, Annual State
Certification of Support for Eligible Telecommunications Carriers
Pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.314**

**New Jersey Board of Public Utilities' Annual Certification for United
Telephone Company of New Jersey, Inc. d/b/a CenturyLink**

Dear Ms. Dortch and Ms. Majcher:

On June 30, 2017, United Telephone Company of New Jersey, Inc. d/b/a CenturyLink ("CenturyLink") filed a verified petition with the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (the "Board") requesting that a certification be filed with the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") and with the Administrator of the Universal Service Support ("USS") fund of the FCC (the "Administrator"), the Universal Service Administrative Company ("USAC"), stating that all federal high-cost support funds provided to CenturyLink within New Jersey were used in the preceding calendar year (2017) and will be used in the coming calendar year (2018) only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended pursuant to § 254(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (the "Act"), 47 U.S.C. § 151 *et seq.* and 47 C.F.R. § 54.314(a). The filing contains 2017 data for cost support, 2018 data for cost support and proforma, an affidavit of newspaper publication, and reports to satisfy requirements of FCC Form 481 and of the Board.

The certification requested by CenturyLink is to be filed by the Board with the FCC and the Administrator on or before October 1, 2017.

The Board certified CenturyLink, a rural telephone company defined at 47 U.S.C. § 153 (44), as an eligible telecommunications carrier pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 214(e) for receipt of federal high-cost support funds pursuant to 47 U.S.C § 254(e). See Order of Approval, In the Matter of a Petition by United Telephone Company of New Jersey, Inc. for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier Under the Telecommunications Act of 1996, Docket No. TO97110828 (December 16, 1998). CenturyLink, an incumbent local exchange carrier, provides service to residential and business access customers in portions of Hunterdon, Somerset, Morris and Warren Counties.

Consistent with prior petitions filed with the Board regarding the use of USS funds, CenturyLink has filed the following information:

- Semi-annual report with Cost Support Response Form for 2015 and supporting schedules of CenturyLink prepared as of December 20, 2016.
- 2017 Pro Forma Cost Support Response Form and supporting schedules and 2018 Projected Cost Support Response Form and supporting schedules as of June 15, 2017.
- Affidavit of David D. Cole, Executive Vice President of Operations Support and Controller, certifying that federal high-cost support funds received by CenturyLink in calendar years 2017 and 2018 have been and will be used in compliance with applicable consumer protection rules, with service quality standards, emergency Carrier Certification, frozen support certification, and accuracy of annual reporting of Connect America Fund recipients Certification.
- Affidavit of Thomas A. Bailey showing CenturyLink annual report filing of FCC Form 481. The report provides service quality improvement reporting, outage reporting, conditions for lifeline customers and other pertinent broadband and voice data.
- Affidavit of Publication dated July 21, 2017 noticing this filing in three newspapers of general circulation in the service territory.

Having reviewed the petition and the information submitted in support thereof pursuant to the requirements of 47 C.F.R. § 54.314, upon review of the complaints filed per lines reported by CenturyLink and finding that no party commented on CenturyLink's continued use of federal USHCS funds after newspaper publication, Board Staff submits that CenturyLink used in 2017 and will use in 2018 the federal funds it receives for the provision, maintenance and upgrading of facilities and services for which such support is intended as required by Section 254(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and 47 C.F.R. S54.101 et. seq. Accordingly, I submit this certification as authorized by the Board.

Sincerely,



Lawanda R. Gilbert, Director
Office of Cable Television & Telecommunications

LG/tc