



UNITED STATES
TELEPHONE
ASSOCIATION

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January 7, 1996

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

William F. Caton
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W. - Room 222
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: Ex Parte Notice
CC Docket No. 96-54

Dear Mr. Caton:

The attached letter was sent today to FCC Chairman Reed Hundt by the National Telephone Cooperative Association, the National Rural Telecom Association, the Organization for the Promotion and Advancement of Small Telephone Companies, and the United States Telephone Association.

An original and one copy of this ex parte notice are being filed in the Office of the Secretary. Please include this notice in the public record of these proceedings.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary McDermott

Vice President - Legal & Regulatory Affairs

attachment

- cc: Michael E. Brunner
- Reed Hundt
- John F. O'Neal
- John Rose
- Roy Neel

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"Representing America's Local Exchange Carriers"

January 7, 1997

Chairman Reed E. Hundt
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 814
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt:

The Rural Telephone Coalition and the United States Telephone Association believe that one aspect of the Joint Board's Recommendation of November 8, 1996 regarding schools and libraries should be the subject of immediate action by the Commission.

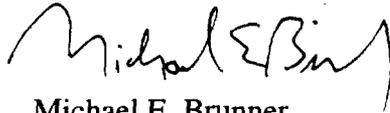
The Joint Board recommended an ambitious program to implement Section 254(h) of the 1996 Telecommunications Act in time to make discounted services available to schools and libraries beginning with the 1997-98 school year. This program will involve a great number of new participants in universal service funding, and coordination of the telecommunications carrier industry with the diverse needs and budget processes of the nation's schools and libraries. Although there are obviously existing relationships state by state and district by district, this is not information that has previously been centralized within the telecommunications industry. In short, there is a long way to go and a short time to get there.

For this reason the associations urge the Commission to act promptly on the Joint Board's recommendation to appoint NECA as interim administrator of the schools, libraries and health care portion of the new universal service fund. We believe that the complexities of the task are such that immediate action is required for the program to be established and operational during the coming year. Above all, no change should be implemented that could adversely affect NECA's important role as tariff and pool administrator.

We are available to discuss this further with the Commission, Joint Board or other interested parties, but we again urge that you take up this part of the Joint Board's recommendation immediately.

Sincerely yours,

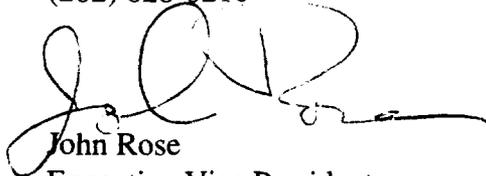
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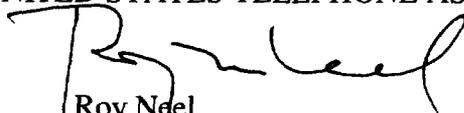


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