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June 29, 2015

Via ECFS

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

Re: *Technology Transitions*, GN Docket No. 13-5; GN Docket No. 12-353

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On June 25, 2015, Joseph Farano of Manhattan Telecommunications Corporation d/b/a Metropolitan Telecommunications (“MetTel”), and the undersigned met with Amy Bender, Legal Advisor to Commissioner O’Rielly. Mr. Farano participated in the meeting by telephone and I participated in person.

We explained that MetTel relies largely on the use of a voice-grade product purchased from ILECs to serve multi-location businesses that have relatively modest needs for voice communications at each location (most frequently 1-10 lines). The locations are widely dispersed, and often in suburban, exurban and rural areas where no competitive carrier has facilities and it is not economical for a CLEC to construct facilities duplicating the ILEC’s, given the very limited demand at each location. Moreover, the local cable company usually cannot construct facilities to reach these businesses on an economical basis. MetTel has received quotes to build ranging to the hundreds of thousands of dollars in special construction costs. Only infrequently are such construction costs low enough to make use of cable facilities economically viable.

We pointed out that absent a requirement that ILECs continue to provide facilities to CLECs on comparable terms to those they currently provide, the customers will not have any competitive choice. MetTel has an average of approximately 3.57 lines per location. The cost of constructing competitive facilities (or extending cable facilities) to serve such small customers could not be recovered in any commercially realistic time frame. It is inevitable that in a post-transition world in which ILECs had no obligation to provide service at wholesale, the ILECs

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would face no competition. Thus, these small business customers would be at the mercy of an unregulated monopolist, which would not be in the interest of the small business customers or in the public interest.

We urged the Commission to move forward with an order that would establish that post-transition, ILECs are required to continue to offer wholesale inputs, including those found in commercial agreements, on rates, terms and conditions equivalent to those they offer today.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Eric J. Branfman

Eric J. Branfman
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Telecommunications

cc: Amy Bender (Via E-Mail)