

June 29, 2015

**VIA ECFS**

***EX PARTE NOTICE***

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

**Re: *Technology Transitions, GN Docket No. 13-5; AT&T Petition to Launch a Proceeding Concerning the TDM-to-IP Transition, GN Docket No. 12-353; Policies and Rules Governing the Retirement of Copper Loops by Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers, RM-11358; Special Access Rates for Price Cap Local Exchange Carriers, WC Docket No. 05-25 and RM-10593***

Dear Ms. Dortch,

The Commission is hearing from the consumers themselves in this proceeding. End-users are making it clear that ensuring that they (*e.g.*, anchor institutions, non-profits, and business end-users of all sizes) do not lose their existing service and provider options must be a priority of the Commission as the Nation's communications networks transition to a new technology. This latest change in technology does not alter the need for competition. The demand for competitive options by consumers is demonstrated by the *hundreds of consumer letters* that have been submitted into the record. The industries represented by the letters are diverse, including health care providers, learning institutions, school districts, public safety organizations, cities, hotel chains, restaurant and fast food chains, clothing lines etc. They are demanding the tailored services and good customer service provided by competitive providers that rely on wholesale input services of the incumbent.

These end-users espouse the benefits they obtain from the service offerings of competitive providers.<sup>1</sup> For example:

Oregon Coast Bank states: "We have chosen a competitive carrier for our voice and data services. They provide the individualized services and customer support we need. Whenever we are planning new projects or have any reason to speak with our carrier, we know that we can talk to a person that can help us in a matter of seconds. The support is unparalleled and the lengths they have gone to in order to tailor the services

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<sup>1</sup> The following quotes were provided via email sent on June 25, 2015, from Angie Kronenberg, copying Chip Pickering and Karen Reidy, of COMPTTEL, to Jon Sallet, Gigi Sohn, Matt DelNero, and Daniel Alvarez.

they deliver to exactly what we need is extraordinary. We would truly be lost without them.”<sup>2</sup>

Greene County Health Department, Greene County IL, states: “[R]ural health care providers [] rely upon fast and efficient broadband networks to deliver the best health care we can to American communities. Therefore, competitive market access to the broadband options and solutions that we need is crucial for our industry’s growth and survival. We have chosen TeleQuality Communications as the competitive carrier for our voice and data services. They provide the individualized services and customer support we need to continue serving our patients.”<sup>3</sup>

Tomorrow’s World Early Learning Center states: “Our needs are different than elementary and secondary education facilities. That is why it is important to have several different broadband packages, options and providers in the marketplace. With our age group, we focus on interactive play time, and not interactive screen time. That is the reason we want a lower cost option that would meet the needs of our facility and staff.”<sup>4</sup>

Arnoff Moving & Storage states that it chose a competitive provider because it “needed a company that would share both our values and our commitment to customer service. Our logistic operation, which stretches across multiple locations, needs a telecommunications network that is cost effective, user friendly and serviced by friendly people.”<sup>5</sup>

Pook & Pook, Inc. Auctioneers and Appraisers states: “Having the ability to choose a broadband provider who understands our business and product offerings is important.”<sup>6</sup>

Finally, the Office of Advocacy, U.S. Small Business Administration, aptly sums up the issues with the following:

“Competitive carriers have made a strong case that their ability to purchase wholesale access to incumbent networks is necessary to provide small business consumers with meaningful choices among various service providers for their broadband and voice needs. Competitive carriers offer services and products to small businesses that incumbent providers do not offer, and may lack the incentive to offer without any competitive pressure to do so. Current data shows that competitive carriers provide nearly one-third of the wireline services consumed by small businesses. Incumbent carriers should not be allowed to remove these choices from small business consumers by charging competitive carriers higher wholesale rates or demanding more onerous contract terms when

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<sup>2</sup> Letter of Trevor Downing, Sr. Vice President, to Chairman Wheeler, dated June 19, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Letter of Linda Snyder, Supervisor of Admin. Svcs., to Chairman Wheeler, dated June 16, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Letter of Mary Jane Johnson, Owner, to Chairman Wheeler, dated June 15, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Letter of Alyssa Bergenson, Dir. of Human Resources, dated June 10, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Letter of Deirdre Pook Margarellh, Vice Pres., to Chairman Wheeler, dated June 16, 2015.

modernizing their network technology. Competitive carriers and small business consumers have supported the continued investments of incumbents in our nation's telecommunications infrastructure, and they should not be left behind as that infrastructure evolves. The FCC should ensure that small businesses will not lose access to affordable, tailored products that meet their unique needs.”<sup>7</sup>

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about this submission.

Respectfully submitted,

*/s/ Karen Reidy*

cc: Jon Sallet  
Gigi Sohn  
Matt DelNero  
Daniel Alvarez

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<sup>7</sup> Letter from Jamie Belcore Saloom, SBA Office of Advocacy, to Chairman Wheeler, dated June 23, 2015.