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Received & Inspected

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FCC Mail Room

September 9, 2015

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 Administration 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 December 15, 2014, pursuant to the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities' ("Board") Order dated November 20, 2012 in Docket No. TO12090874, United Telephone Company of New Jersey, Inc. d/b/a CenturyLink ("CenturyLink") filed with the Board a semi-annual report on its use of Universal Service High-Cost Support ("USHCS") funds. The report was due on January 1, 2015.

On June 25, 2015, pursuant to section 254(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and 47 C.F.R. § 54.314, CenturyLink filed a verified petition with the Board, under Docket No. TO12090874, requesting that the Board file a certification with the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") and the Universal Service Fund Administrator, stating that CenturyLink's

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use of USHCS funds is consistent with the purposes for which such funds may be used, according to federal law, and that all federal universal fund support provided to CenturyLink within the State of New Jersey was used in preceding calendar year 2014 and will be used in coming calendar year 2016 only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended.

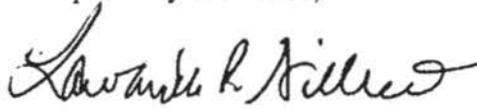
CenturyLink has filed the following information:

- A- Cost Support Response Form for 2015 and supporting schedules of CenturyLink prepared as of June 15, 2015 (schedules for 2015 pro forma and 2016 projected);
- B- Affidavit of David D. Cole, Executive Vice President of Operations Support and Controller, certifying that the federal high cost universal service support funds received by CenturyLink in calendar years 2014 and 2016 have been and will be used only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which such support is intended;
- C- An annual report filing of FCC Form 481, Carrier Annual reporting by CenturyLink. The report provides service quality improvement reporting, outage reporting, conditions for lifeline customers and other pertinent broadband and voice data; and
- D- Form of newspaper publication of notice of this filing.

Having reviewed the petition and the information submitted in support thereof, Board Staff noted the affidavit of CenturyLink's Executive Vice President of Operations Support and Controller certifying that it used and will use funds only for the provision, maintenance and upgrading of facilities and services intended. Staff also viewed satisfactorily the number of complaints per 10,000 lines reported by CenturyLink. In addition, given that no party has commented negatively to CenturyLink's continued use of federal USHCS funds after newspaper publications on July 9 and 10, 2015, Board Staff submits that CenturyLink used and will use the federal USHCS funds it receives during 2016 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., § 54.101 et seq. Accordingly, I hereby submit this Certification, as authorized by the Board.

Also, state certification is required on an annual basis, and in order to ensure use of federal high cost support funds in a manner consistent with federal law, Century Link will continue to follow the Board's directives to submit to the Board, no later than July 1st and January 1st of each year, a report, in a manner and format to be determined by Staff, providing auditable information sufficient to determine CenturyLink's compliance with federal law, including, but not limited to, compliance with the FCC's required uses of Universal Service Support high cost funds, the Connect America Funds and to simultaneously publish notice of the filing in newspapers of general circulation in its service territory. Such notice shall be reviewed by Staff prior to its publication.

Respectfully submitted,



Lawanda Gilbert
Director

PF/tc