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January 19, 2016

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 - 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Ex Parte

Re: Notice of Ex Parte Presentation, WC Docket No. 10-90 and 14-93.

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The Utilities Telecom Council is providing the following ex parte notification in the above-referenced proceeding in accordance with Section 1.1206 of the Commission's Rules. On January 13, 2016, Randy Klindt from Co-Mo Electric Cooperative, David Allen from Midwest Energy Cooperative, Kyle Williamson from SyncGlobal Telecom and the Fiber Networks Owners Alliance ("FNA"), and Paul Belk, Donna Unger, and Michael Foor from North Georgia Network ("NGN") and the FNA, C. Douglas Jarrett, counsel for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association ("NRECA"), as well as the undersigned on behalf of the Utilities Telecom Council ("UTC") met with Commissioner Pai and his Wireline Legal Advisor, Nick Degani to discuss matters related to the above-referenced proceedings.

The purpose of the meeting was to support the adoption of a framework for the reverse auction for Phase II of the Connect America Fund that would promote opportunities for fiber projects to successfully bid for access to funding in unserved areas. The representatives from the cooperative utilities, the FNA and from UTC and NRECA explained that utilities are already deploying fiber networks into unserved rural areas and that they are doing this cost-effectively, while offering various service packages up to a gigabit for less than \$100 month. They explained that there are many more utilities, including next-in-line bidders for Rural Broadband Experiments, who are interested in deploying fiber optic networks and offering robust, affordable and reliable broadband services to unserved Americans. These utilities could be foreclosed from access to the Connect America Fund, if the framework for the reverse auction is structured so that the fiber projects that they are proposing are unable to compete as a practical matter. This could leave many areas of the country stranded with slower, less reliable and more expensive services for the next ten years. This would be an incredible missed opportunity that would set rural America back a generation.

This positions expressed during the meeting were consistent with the positions that UTC has supported in previous meetings and written presentations with the Commission (*See e.g.* Letter from Brett Kilbourne, Vice President & Deputy General Counsel, Utilities Telecom Council to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, WC Docket No. 10-90 (filed July 6, 2015)). During the meeting, the parties provided a memorandum of testimonials from customers in Michigan, who support Midwest Energy Cooperative's plans to offer fiber optic broadband services as an alternative to other technologies, including satellite. The memorandum is attached as part of this ex parte filing. In addition, the parties provided a brochure describing the Fiber Network Owners Alliance and explaining how the FNA could serve as a model for organizations to band together to provide broadband and how a USAC funding mechanism is needed for the FNA's Exchange end users. A copy of the brochure is attached as part of this ex parte filing.

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Thank you for your help in this matter. If there are any questions concerning this matter, please let me know.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brett Kilbourne".

Brett Kilbourne

cc: FCC participants