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April 29, 2002

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Ex parte Presentation in CC Docket Nos. 96-45 and 00-256

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On Thursday, April 25, I made an *ex parte* presentation on behalf of CenturyTel, Inc. ("CenturyTel") to Kyle Dixon, Legal Advisor to Chairman Powell, concerning the pending Petition for Reconsideration of the National Telephone Cooperative Association in the above-referenced proceedings. The enclosed briefing sheet was distributed during the meeting.

In the meeting, I noted that high-cost support for rural carriers has declined in 2002 because Section 36.603(a) of the Commission's rules requires support to be based on support for calendar year 2001, but the re-basing of the high-cost fund only took effect July 1, 2001. CenturyTel urges that the Commission revise its rules so high-cost support for 2002 is based on support distributed in the second half of 2001 (annualized), and to make such change effective as of January 1, 2002.

Pursuant to the Commission's rules, I am electronically filing a copy of this letter and the enclosure for inclusion in the record of each of the above-referenced proceedings. Please contact me at (202) 637-2262 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Karen Brinkmann

Enclosure