

K R A S K I N, L E S S E & C O S S O N, L L C  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

2120 L Street, N.W., Suite 520  
Washington, D.C. 20037

Telephone (202) 296-8890  
Telecopier (202) 296-8893

**FILED ELECTRONICALLY**

November 5, 2003

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

Re: Notice of Ex Parte Presentation  
of the Rural Independent Competitive Alliance in CC  
Docket Nos. 96-45, 97-21; DA 03-2957

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On this day I sent the attached letter to Chris Libertelli of the Chairman's office, in support of the Rural Independent Competitive Alliance (RICA) nomination of its Chair, Paul Schuetzler, to the board of directors of the Universal Service Administrative Company.

Please contact the undersigned with any questions related to this submission.

Respectfully submitted,

*/Clifford C. Rohde/*  
Clifford C. Rohde  
Counsel to RICA

Enclosure

Cc: Chris Libertelli (via email)

K R A S K I N, L E S S E & C O S S O N, L L C  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

2120 L Street, N.W., Suite 520  
Washington, D.C. 20037

Telephone (202) 296-8890  
Telecopier (202) 296-8893

**VIA EMAIL**

November 5, 2003

Mr. Chris Libertelli  
Office of Chairman Powell  
Federal Communications Commission  
445-12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Written Ex Parte Presentation  
of the Rural Independent Competitive Alliance in CC  
Docket Nos. 96-45, 97-21; DA 03-2957

Dear Chris:

Dave Cosson and I neglected to mention yesterday that we hope the Commission will approve RICA's October 15 nomination of Paul Schuetzler, the chair of RICA and CEO of Consolidated Telcom, to the fill the slot on the USAC Board reserved for a CLEC representative.

Rural CLECs operate in low density, high cost areas where the effective and efficient administration of universal service support by USAC is of most concern. Yet since its inception, the USAC board has been without representation from the estimated 140 rural CLECs providing superior and advanced services nationwide. As primarily facilities-based carriers, RICA members have brought substantial benefits in the form of improved quality and grade of service, including access to advanced services, which would otherwise be unavailable in their communities.

With more than 23 years in telecommunications, Mr. Schuetzler has extensive experience in organization management, accounting, budgeting and finance, and the Commission's rules regarding universal service support. In addition, he has worked closely with multiple schools with respect to the successful implementation of "E-rate" programs administered by the Schools and Libraries Division of USAC. In short, Mr. Schuetzler is uniquely qualified to make a substantial contribution to the effective oversight of USAC. A copy of his bio is attached.

RICA written ex parte  
November 5, 2003  
Page 2

Please do not hesitate to contact Dave Cosson or me with any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

*/Clifford C. Rohde/*  
Clifford C. Rohde  
Counsel to RICA

Enclosure

## Biography of Paul G. Schuetzler



Paul Schuetzler, Consolidated Telcom’s CEO, has served the telecommunications industry for the past 23 years. In his current role, Mr. Schuetzler is responsible for the vision, development and growth of Consolidated Telcom, a telephone cooperative serving southwest North Dakota, as well as its numerous subsidiaries offering competitive telephone service, broadband and cable television services. Working closely with industry organizations, regulatory bodies and congressional members, he provides a respected voice to small, rural communications providers.

Mr. Schuetzler is Chairman of RICA (Rural Independent Competitive Alliance), an organization of more than 80 small, competitive local exchange carriers providing advanced telecommunication services to underserved markets in rural America.

Mr. Schuetzler also serves on numerous local and state organizations and boards as an advocate of rural and competitive providers. He and Consolidated work closely with local schools and libraries to maximize the effectiveness of their Universal Service Administrative Company-administered Schools and Libraries (“E-rate”) funding. They have developed the SPICE (southwest pipeline of information for communities and education) consortium of five school districts and Dickinson State University in southwest North Dakota to provide shared, video based instruction to increase the learning opportunities in our rural communities.

Starting his telecommunications career in 1980 with United Telephone (now Sprint), Mr. Schuetzler has also spent time with Citizens Utilities and, in 1997, joined Consolidated Telcom to start up their competitive telecommunications business.

Mr. Schuetzler graduated Boise State University with a degree in accounting, and received his MBA from LaSalle University.

### Contact information:

Paul G. Schuetzler  
CEO, Consolidated Telcom  
P.O. Box 1408  
Dickinson, ND 58602  
Tel. (701) 483-4000  
Fax (701) 483-7422  
Email: [paul@consolidatedtelcom.com](mailto:paul@consolidatedtelcom.com)