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March 22, 2004

Via Electronic Filing

Marlene Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: CC Docket 96-45; GN Docket 04-54:
Notice of *Ex Parte* Presentation

Dear Ms. Dortch:

John Jones of CenturyTel, Inc. met with Jessica Rosenworcel of the Office of Commissioner Copps on Thursday, March 18, 2004, concerning the above-captioned proceedings. In this meeting, Mr. Jones summarized the testimony delivered by CenturyTel CEO Glen Post before the Senate Commerce Committee on February 24, 2004. He stressed the need for coordinated policies on universal service, access charges, and other matters within the Commission's jurisdiction, in order to ensure that all Americans, including those in rural areas, have access to advanced telecommunications capability. Mr. Jones and Ms. Rosenworcel specifically discussed whether broadband deployment in rural America should be supported by federal universal service programs. In addition, concerning the contribution methodology for federal universal service programs,¹ they discussed whether a revenues-based approach, or a combination of revenues and connections as a basis for contributions, would be preferable to a numbers-based approach, to fully and fairly capture all required contributions and adequately fund the FCC's programs over the long term. Please direct any questions concerning this matter to me.

Very truly yours,



Karen Brinkmann

cc: Jessica Rosenworcel

¹ See *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in CC Dockets 96-45 et al.*, FCC 02-43 paras. 30-109 (rel. Feb. 26, 2002).