

LATHAM & WATKINS^{LLP}

November 4, 2005

BY ELECTRONIC FILING

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

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Re: CC Dockets 96-45 and 01-92; MB Docket 05-255 – Ex Parte
Presentation

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On November 3, 2005, Glen Post, Stacey Goff and John Jones of CenturyTel, Inc. and I had meetings with the following individuals concerning the above-captioned proceedings: Chairman Martin and Michelle Carey, Commissioner Copps and Jessica Rosenworcel, and Commissioner Adelstein and Scott Bergmann. In addition, on November 2, 2005, Stacey Goff and I met with Steven Broeckert of the Media Bureau concerning the FCC's inquiry in MB Docket 05-255.

In these meetings, CenturyTel urged prompt resolution of the Commission's rulemaking to consider the contribution methodology for universal service. CenturyTel advocated basing the contribution obligation on total telecommunications revenues or, in the absence of statutory authority for such an approach, a hybrid numbers-connections approach. CenturyTel reiterated concerns raised in its pleadings in CC Docket 96-45 that all users of public switched networks should contribute on a competitively neutral basis, and that any change in methodology should not have a disproportionate impact on rural and low-income consumers.

CenturyTel also discussed issues raised in its pleadings in CC Docket 96-45 concerning the disbursement of rural high-cost funding. CenturyTel reiterated its advocacy that designation of competitive eligible telecommunications carriers (CETCs) should be reasonably constrained so as to ensure that it benefits the public, and meaningful and mandatory requirements should be applied to CETCs for the justification of support they receive. CenturyTel also emphasized the need to modify the rural growth factor so the total amount of high-cost funding for incumbent local exchange carriers does not continue to decline merely as a result of line loss in the industry.

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CenturyTel also urged prompt action on its call in Docket 01-92 for enforcement of a carrier's right to collect lawful access charges and reciprocal compensation for termination of telecommunications traffic. CenturyTel advocated investigation and appropriate action against carriers that attempt to engage in illegal bypass of these charges by misrouting or mislabeling telecommunications traffic.

Finally, CenturyTel described its efforts to deploy Internet Protocol-based multichannel video services over its digital subscriber line platform, and noted that non-discriminatory access to programming is essential if telephone companies are to be able to successfully compete in the multichannel video distribution market. CenturyTel urged that the Commission take an active role, through Docket 05-255 and in enforcement proceedings, to ensure that all competitors have a meaningful opportunity to bring their services to customers.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Karen Brinkmann

cc: Chairman Martin
Commissioner Adelstein
Commissioner Copps
Michelle Carey
Scott Bergmann
Jessica Rosenworcel
Steven Broecker