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January 19, 2006

BY ELECTRONIC FILING

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

Re: CC Dockets 96-45 and 01-92 -- Ex Parte Presentation

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On January 18, 2006, I met with Michelle Carey of Chairman Martin's office and the following individuals from CenturyTel, Inc. participated by telephone conference: John Jones, Nolan Moullé, Ted Hankins, Donnie Aultman, Lisa Farrar, and Cal Simshaw. In this meeting CenturyTel described the impact of negative line growth on the Rural Growth Factor used to set the size of the rural high-cost loop fund, noted that total high-cost loop support available to incumbent local exchange carriers declined for the first time in 2005, and will decline further in 2006, due to the unintended consequence of negative line growth as used in the Rural Growth Factor. CenturyTel advocates that the Commission modify the Rural Growth Factor so line growth can never be less than zero, and recalculate support from 2003 to the present based on this change. CenturyTel believes this incremental adjustment to the rural high-cost loop support mechanism is a reasonable and needed modification that will somewhat mitigate the impact on incumbent local exchange carriers of declining line counts in rural areas, without significantly expanding the overall size of the fund.

The enclosed materials, which were given to Ms. Carey at the meeting, summarize CenturyTel's presentation.

In the same meeting, we briefly discussed CenturyTel's proposal in Docket 01-92 for FCC enforcement of a carrier's right to collect lawful access charges and reciprocal compensation for termination of telecommunications traffic, and adoption of rules explicitly addressing phantom traffic (illegal bypass of these charges through misrouting or mislabeling telecommunications traffic). CenturyTel emphasized the growing industry consensus on the proposed rules and the need for prompt Commission action.

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Please direct any questions concerning this matter to me.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Karen Brinkmann
Counsel to CenturyTel, Inc.

Enclosure

cc: Michelle Carey
Tom Navin
Jeremy Marcus
Tamara Preiss
Narda Jones