

Michael R. Romano  
Phone: 202.373.6092  
Fax: 202.373.6001  
michael.romano@bingham.com

June 5, 2009

**VIA ELECTRONIC FILING**

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

Re: Notice of Ex Parte Communication  
***GN Docket No. 09-29 (Report on a Rural Broadband Strategy); GN Docket No. 09-40 (Commission's Consultative Role in the Broadband Provisions of the Recovery Act); WC Docket No. 05-337 (High-Cost Universal Service Support); WC Docket No. 03-109 (Lifeline and Link-Up); CC Docket No. 96-45 (Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service)***

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On June 4, 2009, Ken Pfister of Great Plains Communications, Inc. ("Great Plains"), Cheryl Parrino of Parrino Strategic Consulting Group, and Michael Romano of Bingham McCutchen LLP met with Commissioner Adelstein and his Chief of Staff and Senior Legal Advisor, Renée Crittendon.

The participants discussed next steps to achieve the objectives outlined in the recently released Rural Broadband Report. Great Plains discussed the remote nature of many unserved rural areas, the high costs (both initial and recurring) of providing broadband services over such distances and to areas with such low population densities, and the impacts that such factors have on broadband availability, speed, and price for rural end users. Great Plains further noted that the high costs and potential bottlenecks on speed involved in providing such services include not only last-mile facilities, but also the "middle-mile" transport needed to reach from rural areas to Internet gateways and major telecommunications hubs that are dozens or hundreds of miles away.

Great Plains noted that one-time funding under the Recovery Act programs is much needed and will enable deployment of broadband services in rural areas where they might otherwise not be available for years or decades. Great Plains also advocated, however, using the Rural Broadband Report as a catalyst for universal service reform to promote expanded access to and adoption of affordable and reasonably comparable broadband services in the most rural locations nationwide.

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Bingham McCutchen LLP  
2020 K Street NW  
Washington, DC  
20006-1806

T 202.373.6000  
F 202.373.6001  
bingham.com

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Thank you for your attention to this correspondence. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

*/s/ electronically signed*

Michael R. Romano

cc (by e-mail): Commissioner Adelstein  
Renée Crittendon