



CenturyLink™

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EX PARTE NOTICE

October 16, 2009

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

Re: A National Broadband Plan for Our Future, GN Docket No. 09-51; High-Cost Universal Service Support, WC Docket No. 05-337; Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, CC Docket No. 96-45; Developing a Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime, CC Docket No. 01-92; Special Access Rates for Price Cap Local Exchange Carriers, WC Docket No. 05-25.

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of CenturyLink, Tom Gerke, Jeff Glover, David Zesiger, David Bartlett, and I met with Blair Levin and Carol Matthey of the Omnibus Broadband Initiative on October 15, 2009. We also met with Sharon Gillett, Nick Alexander, Irene Flannery, Marcus Maher, and Alex Minard of the Wireline Competition Bureau. We also met with Paul de Sa of the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Analysis. Finally, we met with Robert Curtis, Carol Matthey, Tom Brown, and Rebekah Goodheart of the Omnibus Broadband Initiative. We advised the Commission staff in each meeting that David Bartlett is a registered lobbyist and, in accordance with the March 20, 2009, *White House Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Agencies: Ensuring Responsible Spending of Recovery Act Funds*, CenturyLink confirms that fact.

In each of the meetings, we discussed CenturyLink's business and experiences with the economics of delivering service in areas with low population densities. In particular, we discussed the need for second mile and middle mile support in unserved areas in order to fulfill the goal for universal broadband availability. We also discussed CenturyLink's advocacy regarding universal service, intercarrier compensation, and facilitating broadband deployment over the past two years, including the reform proposals filed last year in the above-captioned dockets by the Independent Telephone and Telecommunications Alliance (ITTA) and the universal service reform legislation introduced in the last session by Representatives Boucher and Terry. In particular, we discussed the erosion of the various support mechanisms that have facilitated the universal availability of affordable, high-quality telecommunications services comparable to those available at comparable rates in higher-density areas. We explained that rural consumers will suffer in the absence of intercarrier compensation reform, particularly in the face of self-help that only exacerbates the problems. Finally, we explained that special access customers in CenturyLink markets often chose competitive providers, and where there are fewer alternatives, CenturyLink's rates remain fully regulated and are sold at just and reasonable rates.

The discussion was consistent with the filings made by CenturyTel and Embarq in the above-captioned dockets, and was facilitated by the three exhibits filed with this letter.

Pursuant to Section 1.1206(b) of the Commission's rules, one copy of this electronic notice is being filed in each of the above-referenced dockets. Please contact me if you have any questions or need anything else.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey S Lanning". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeffrey" being the most prominent.

Jeffrey S Lanning

cc: Blair Levin
Carol Matthey
Sharon Gillett
Nick Alexander
Irene Flannery
Marcus Maher
Alex Minard
Paul de Sa
Robert Curtis
Tom Brown
Rebekah Goodheart
Carol Matthey