

December 4, 2009

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

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

Re: *Letter of XO Communications, LLC in Response to NBP Public
Notice #23, GN Docket Nos. 09-47, 09-51, 09-137*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

XO Communications, LLC (“XO Communications”) hereby responds to the Federal Communications Commission’s (“FCC’s” or “Commission’s”) Public Notice #23 regarding the network deployment study conducted by the Columbia Institute for Tele-Information.¹ XO Communications commends the FCC and CITI for undertaking this analysis of ongoing and future deployment of broadband networks, and appreciates the CITI Study’s discussion of recent advancements in copper-based Digital Subscriber Line (“DSL”) service. As the FCC determines its national broadband strategy, it should give full consideration to the continuing evolution of copper-based technologies. With the development of Ethernet-over-copper (“EoC”) technology, the existing, ubiquitous copper infrastructure represents an attractive last-mile delivery mechanism for broadband throughout the United States.

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS

6. Please provide any other comments on the CITI study that you deem relevant.

The CITI Study reviews the broadband network deployment plans of wireline, wireless, and satellite service providers. In discussing the provision of wireline broadband service, the CITI Study notes that “DSL bonding, now in commercial deployment, will allow doubling [data] speeds.”² As the FCC reviews the CITI Study and prepares its National Broadband Plan, it should give substantial weight to these and other advances in copper-based technology.

¹ Columbia Institute for Tele-Information, *Broadband in America, Where It Is and Where It Is Going*, Preliminary Report Prepared for the Staff of the FCC’s Omnibus Broadband Initiative (Nov. 11, 2009) (“CITI Study”); Public Notice, *Comments Sought on Network Deployment Study Conducted by the Columbia Institute For Tele-Information*, DA 09-2458 (rel. Nov. 20, 2009) (“NBP Public Notice #23”).

² CITI Study at 9.

While the CITI Study does not specifically reference Ethernet over copper technology, the record in this proceeding demonstrates that EoC can make a substantial contribution to broadband development in the United States. EoC technology supports data speeds up to 45 Mbps today and possibly greater than 100 Mbps in the future, and provides consumers with benefits and functionality that are comparable to fiber-based Ethernet service. Moreover, given the ubiquitous nationwide reach of copper facilities, EoC can be utilized for faster and more cost-effective deployment of broadband than other wireline technologies, including the fiber facilities that currently extend to less than twenty percent of the nation's business locations and require millions of dollars in up-front capital costs.³

Given these factors, XO and other competitive LECs are utilizing EoC technology to extend the reach of their metro and wide area Ethernet networks to business customer locations beyond the reach of fiber. In particular, the cost-effective deployment of EoC promises important benefits for rural areas of the United States that have previously lacked affordable broadband access. This technology will promote regional economic development in rural areas by attracting small, medium, and large businesses that require high-speed transmission services.

Thus, the FCC should accord an integral role to the United States' existing copper infrastructure as it develops a pro-competitive national broadband strategy. The nation's legacy copper loop plant is a national asset that was constructed largely under the protection of a government-sanctioned monopoly and was paid for by American ratepayers. Given its near ubiquity and increasingly robust capabilities, the existing copper infrastructure represents a ready-made solution for expanding broadband access around the country.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Heather Burnett Gold

Heather Burnett Gold
Senior Vice President
XO Communications
703-547-2861
heather.b.gold@xo.com

³ See *Leveraging Installed Copper to Reach Underserved and Unserved Community Anchor Institutions*, Hatteras Networks, at 6 (filed in GN Docket No. 09-51 on June 8, 2009) ("Hatteras Networks Report") (citing Vertical Systems Group, "Got Business Fiber? U.S. Fiber Penetration," available at: <<http://www.verticalsystems.com>>). The CITI Study itself raises questions about the extent of future fiber deployments, noting that "[t]he future investments trend is relatively flat, suggesting that the new infrastructure will not be the main area of growth in terms of [broadband providers'] investments." CITI Study at 69.