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*NOT ADMITTED IN VA

January 26, 2011

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W., Room TW-B204
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: Notice of *Ex Parte* in WC Docket No. 02-60
New England Telehealth Consortium**

Madam Secretary:

In accordance with Section 1.1206 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206, we hereby provide notice of an oral *ex parte* presentation in connection with the above captioned proceeding. On January 24, 2011, Brian Thibeau, President, New England Telehealth Consortium (NETC), Jim Rogers, a telecommunications consultant from ProInfoNet, and undersigned counsel met with Attorney Advisors Jamie Susskind, Divya Shenay, and Chin Yoo in the Telecommunications Access Policy Division of the Wireline Competition Bureau.

We discussed a number of issues relating to the Rural Health Care Program including the Pilot Program deadline extension requests filed by NETC¹ and the Commission's *Notice of*

¹ See Letter from Brian Thibeau, President, New England Telehealth Consortium, to Sharon Gillett, Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, WC Docket No. 02-60 (dated Dec. 9, 2010) ("NETC Request"). NETC requested extensions of both the June 30, 2011, deadline to request funding commitments and the five-year deadline to complete invoicing. *See also Wireline Competition Bureau seeks comment on a request filed by the Indiana Telehealth Network for an extension of the June 30, 2011 deadline for participants in the universal service Rural Health Care Pilot Program to select a vendor and request funding commitment letters from the*

Proposed Rulemaking in the above-referenced docket (FCC 10-125, rel. July 15, 2010). Specifically, we discussed the progress NETC has made on its Pilot Program award to date including the procurement of a network design, and the imminent posting of a request for proposals for network implementation. We discussed the importance and benefits of increased connectivity for the over 2 million residents in three states that reside in areas served by NETC members. We discussed the continued challenges of working through the pilot program administrative processes established by USAC and the need for a further extension of the deadline to apply for funding commitments in the Pilot Program.²

Finally, we discussed certain issues raised in the Commission's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and addressed by NETC in its comments, including the need for urban locations to be eligible under the proposed health broadband services program and the need for a discount percentage higher than 50% in that program.

If you have any questions or require any additional information, please contact undersigned counsel directly.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Mitchell
Counsel for New England
Telehealth Consortium

Enclosure

cc: Jamie Susskind, Esq.

Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), WC Docket No. 02-60 (dated Dec.6, 2010); Wireline Competition Bureau seeks comment on the Michigan Public Health Institute's request for waiver of the five-year invoicing period under the universal service Rural Health Care Pilot Program, WC Docket No. 02-60 (dated Dec.9, 2010).

² NETC's request for a 6 month extension of the deadline to request funding commitments reflected a reasonable expectation that its network implementation RFP would be posted in December 2010. *See NETC Request* at 2-3. We discussed the need for an extension greater than 6 months in light of the fact that this did not occur and that the RFP will not be posted until late January 2011 at the earliest.