

February 4, 2011

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



Re: Notice of *Ex Parte* Presentation
CG Docket No. 10-207 (Bill Shock)
WT Docket No. 10-133 (Mobile Wireless Competition)
CG Docket No. 09-158 (Consumer Information and Disclosure)
GN Docket No. 09-51 (National Broadband Plan)

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On Thursday, February 3, 2011, representatives of several social justice and media reform organizations participated in a series of meetings at the Commission to discuss issues raised in the above-captioned dockets. Many of the entities represented by these meeting participants are member organizations of the Media Action Grassroots Network (“MAG-Net”), a nationwide, local-to-local advocacy network of community groups working together for media change in order to end poverty, eliminate racism, and ensure human rights.

Attendees from these MAG-Net member groups and allied organizations included Malkia Cyril, Amalia Deloney, Oshen Turman, Karlos Gauna Schmieder, and Betty Yu, all of the Center for Media Justice; Steven Renderos and Danielle Peterson, Main Street Project; Carlos Pareja, Peoples Production House; Roberta Rael, Generation Engage; Candelario Vasquez, Media Literacy Project; Ernesto Olivo and Leticia Medina, Media Justice League; Oriana Saportas, Berkeley Community Media; Chaka Mkali, HOPE Community; Elandria Williams, Highlander Center; Chad Johnston, The Peoples Channel; Antoine Haywood, Philly Community Access Media; Nora Ferrell, Community Media Workshop; Milena Velis and Desi Burnette, Media Mobilizing Project; Amber Cortes, KBCS Radio/Reclaim the Media; Lila Kitaeff and Hollis Wong-Wear, Reel Grrls; Amanda Garces, IDEPSCA; Beth McConnell, Chance Williams, and Rachel Colyer, all of the Media and Democracy Coalition; Joel Kelsey, Free Press; and Matt Wood, Media Access Project (collectively, the “MAG-Net Representatives”).

They met with Commissioner Mignon Clyburn and her staff, including Dave Grimaldi; Chief of Staff and Media Legal Advisor; Angela Kronenberg, Wireline Legal Advisor; and Louis Peraertz, Legal Advisor, Wireless, International, and Public Safety. They also met with Joel Gurin, Chief of the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau (“CGB”); and with members of the Office of Native Affairs and Policy within CGB, including Dan Rumelt, Irene Flannery, and Cynthia Bryant.

During the meetings, the Commissioner and her staff, as well as the various CGB representatives, provided general overviews and updates regarding ongoing proceedings at the Commission that are of interest to the MAG-Net Representatives' various organizations and their constituencies. These Commission efforts include analyses of competition in the market for providing mobile wireless services, and especially examining the availability and affordability of mobile broadband Internet access and data services on a widespread basis. They also include a range of proceedings addressing truth-in-billing concerns, lack of transparency in customer service terms, "bill shock," and other carrier practices and potential abuses addressed in the above-captioned dockets

As the MAG-Net representatives made clear, all of these practices tend to affect broadband and mobile wireless users generally, but disproportionately harm the most vulnerable service users. These include members of a number of typically underserved and marginalized populations and regions, such as: persons in communities of color and non-English speaking communities; residents of rural areas and especially those living on woefully underserved tribal and native lands; elderly individuals, as well as young persons and students; job-seekers, low-income earners, and public benefits recipients; and imprisoned individuals and their families. Various MAG-Net Representatives shared individual stories illustrating the dire consequences and devastating impact on these types of customers of a lack of affordable telephone, broadband, and mobile wireless services provided on fair terms. They thus illustrated the unacceptable diminution in economic, educational, civic engagement, artistic, and expressive opportunities for individuals that fall into one or more of these demographic categories.

The MAG-Net Representatives' organizations intend, individually and collectively, to continue providing in these dockets and elsewhere additional details and statistics demonstrating these harms, and further illustrating the need for continued and enhanced Commission oversight and enforcement. In fact, Center for Media Justice and several other organizations represented at these meetings have filed comments in these proceedings and others describing the special reliance on mobile broadband access among individuals in communities of color. Based on that trend toward mobile access alone, these communities especially need the Commission to adopt robust principles applicable to wired and wireless connections alike, if these populations are not to be relegated to second-class status on a bifurcated Internet.

In this meeting however, the MAG-Net representatives concentrated on sharing stories of the real-world impact on individuals who cannot access or afford to take service from reliable advanced communications infrastructure. They shared, among other examples, narratives explaining the plight of secondary school students required to travel 17 miles each way or even to sneak into school and library buildings in order to get online and complete assigned homework; of nascent workforces and newly arrived immigrants too often exploited by their employers, but finally able to communicate about and organize against abuses thanks to the growing availability of handheld devices; and of a wide range of citizens and community groups, arts centers, and economically and socially disadvantaged populations – all facing a disparate

Marlene Dortch
February 4, 2011
Page 3

array of challenges, but united by a common need for communications tools that are more readily available, affordable, and free from abusive and restrictive service terms and billing practices that limit their utility.

We submit this letter to the Secretary's office today pursuant to Section 1.1206(b) of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206(b). Please contact the undersigned should you have any questions regarding this submission.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Matthew F. Wood

cc: Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Joel Gurin
Dave Grimaldi
Angela Kronenberg
Louis Peraertz
Dan Rumelt
Irene Flannery
Cynthia Bryant