



January 18, 2012

**EX PARTE**

Ms. Marlene Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 11-42, Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization; CC Docket No. 96-45, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service; WC Docket No. 03-109, Lifeline and Link Up

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On January 17, 2012, Dale Schmick, Chief Strategy Officer, YourTel America, Inc., Vice President of TerraCom and Chairman of the Board of COMPTTEL, Jonathan Lee, counsel for YourTel and TerraCom, and the undersigned met with Zac Katz, Sharon Gillett, Carol Matthey, Kim Scardino and Garnet Hanley regarding the above-captioned Lifeline/Link Up reform proceedings.

We discussed the Commission's amendment of the definition of voice telephony in Section 54.101 of the rules and the impact of the change on carriers who had been designated eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) by state commissions under the Commission's prior definition of supported services. We stressed the need for clarity in any guidance the Commission provides state commissions with respect to interpretation of the new rule in the context of pending and new applications for ETC designation.

We emphasized the continuing importance of Link Up in providing assistance to low income consumers to cover the cost of service activation fees. For more than a decade, the Commission has made clear that both wireline and wireless carriers are eligible for "Link Up support for the 'customary charge for commencing telecommunications services,' as defined in section 54.411 of the Commission's rules, including wireless activation fees."<sup>1</sup> Any changes or revisions to the Link Up rules must be technology neutral.

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<sup>1</sup> *Twenty-Fifth Order on Reconsideration, Report and Order, Order, and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, CC Docket No. 96-45, FCC 03=115 (rel. May 21, 2003) at ¶18.

Ms. Marlene Dortch  
January 18, 2012  
Page 2

We noted that the establishment of a National Database to verify consumer eligibility and to check for duplicate coverage will go a long way toward reducing waste, fraud and abuse in the Lifeline/Link Up fund.

If you have any questions or need additional information, kindly contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Mary C. Albert

cc: Zac Katz  
Sharon Gillett  
Carol Matthey  
Kim Scardino  
Garnet Hanley