



April 26, 2012

Via Electronic Filing

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

Re: Notice of Oral *Ex Parte* Communications, WC Docket Nos. 11-42, 03-109, 12-23; CC Docket No. 96-45

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On April 24, 2012, Policy Director Benjamin Lennett, Policy Counsel Sarah Morris, Field Analyst Greta Byrum, and Senior Research Fellow Seeta Pena Gangadharan of the New America Foundation's Open Technology Institute ("NAF"), spoke with Jordan Usdan, Attorney Advisor for the Federal Communications Commission's Broadband Task Force and Law Clerk Maya Uppaluru via phone to discuss a Broadband Adoption Academic Workshop hosted by NAF on April 11, 2012, and its implications for the Commission's efforts in broadband adoption and digital literacy. This notice is submitted in compliance with Section 1.1206(b) of the Commission's Rules.

NAF noted that one ongoing challenge for researchers in evaluating broadband adoption efforts is the lack of open access to data, particularly from private sector efforts such as Comcast's Internet Essentials program. NAF noted that these concerns may also apply to public-private partnerships like Connect to Compete and highlighted the need for access to data in order to better understand the impact of these efforts on meaningful broadband adoption. NAF also shared the conclusion of many participants at their broadband adoption workshop that public-private partnerships should be held to a level of scrutiny that is comparable to the scrutiny given to government-funded programs like BTOP to ensure that they are fulfilling the objectives for which they are created.

Further, NAF emphasized that through their work on BTOP evaluation, they have found that measuring numbers of home subscription rates to evaluate the success of broadband adoption programs is too narrow a method to measure meaningful adoption and use. As the broadband adoption workshop underscored, broadband adoption is best understood as a continuum, with various characteristics such as motivation, relevance,

and confidence providing context to help define the end-user's experience. Pointing to its own previous filings in the Commission's Lifeline and Link Up docket,¹ NAF noted that a variety of broadband adoption characteristics can be captured and measured through entry and exit surveys, as well as through focus groups that look closely and qualitatively at the effects of broadband adoption efforts on individuals in the target communities. NAF reiterated the need to include these types of metrics in all Commission-led adoption and literacy efforts.

Finally, NAF also spoke about lessons learned from the broadband adoption workshop relating to digital literacy training and to the social and community components of increasing broadband adoption. With respect to digital literacy training, NAF noted that one-on-one assistance is positively correlated with meaningful broadband adoption and that digital literacy solutions cannot be one-size-fits all, but rather must reflect the cultural and demographic needs and characteristics of local communities. With regard to the social and community components of broadband adoption, NAF noted the need for adoption efforts to engage trusted institutions and organizations, address linguistic challenges of community members, and focus on community-wide (as opposed to strictly individual) effects.

Pursuant to the Commission's rules, this notice is being filed in the above-referenced dockets for inclusion in the public record.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Sarah J. Morris

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¹ In particular, to the "Proposed Lifeline Pilot Evaluation Metrics" proposal attached to NAF's August 26, 2011, filing with the Benton Foundation and others, as well as a supplement to that proposal that was first filed as an attachment to NAF's November 15, 2011, ex parte in the Lifeline docket.