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EX PARTE

January 8, 2013

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: *WC Docket No. 10-90, Connect America Fund; GN Docket No. 09-51, National Broadband Plan for our Future; WC Docket No. 07-135, Establishing Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers; WC Docket No. 05-337, High-Cost Universal Service Support; CC Docket No. 01-92, Developing a Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime; CC Docket No. 96-45, Federal State Joint Board on Universal Service*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On January 7, 2013, Jeffery Gardner and I, from Windstream Corporation (“Windstream”), met with Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel and her legal advisor Priscilla Argeris. We discussed Windstream’s views on universal service and intercarrier compensation reform, as well as Commissioner Rosenworcel’s December 13, 2012 PLI speech. The conversation was consistent with Windstream’s past filings on these topics.¹

Windstream noted that the Commission has \$485 million in Connect America Fund (“CAF”) Phase I support available specifically to address the need for broadband deployment in high-cost areas served by price cap carriers—an issue that Congress, the Commission, and consumers have identified as an urgent priority. Windstream emphasized that the Commission should distribute this funding in 2013, as part of a workable CAF Phase I framework, rather than

¹ See, e.g., Letter from Jennie B. Chandra, Windstream, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 07-135, 05-337, 03-109, GN Docket No. 09-51, CC Docket Nos. 01-92, 96-45 (April 19, 2012) (discussing intercarrier compensation treatment of VoIP-PSTN traffic); Comments of Windstream Communications on Sections XVIII.L-R, Inc., WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 07-135, 05-337, 03-109, GN Docket No. 09-51, CC Docket Nos. 01-92, 96-45, WT Docket No. 10-208 (February 24, 2012) (responding to Commission’s proposals and questions regarding intercarrier compensation reform); Comments of Windstream Communications on Sections XVII.A-K, Inc., WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 07-135, 05-337, 03-109, GN Docket No. 09-51, CC Docket Nos. 01-92, 96-45, WT Docket No. 10-208, at 16-32 (January 18, 2012) (noting that Connect America Fund Phase II for price cap carriers should incorporate a viable model, a targeted and efficient competitive bidding process, and alignment of support and obligations).

abandoning CAF Phase I and putting the \$485 million—and the meaningful broadband deployment that could result from it—on hold until CAF Phase II is implemented at some indeterminate future time.

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this submission.

Sincerely,

/s/ Eric N. Einhorn

Eric N. Einhorn

cc: Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel
Priscilla Argeris