

Malena F. Barzilai
Senior Counsel, Government Affairs
Windstream Corporation
1101 17th Street, N.W., Suite 802
Washington, DC 20036

(202) 223-4276
malena.barzilai@windstream.com



VIA ECFS

EX PARTE

March 28, 2013

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

Re: *WC Docket No. 10-90, Connect America Fund; WC Docket No. 05-337, High-Cost Universal Service Support*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On March 27, 2013, Jeffery Gardner, President and CEO of Windstream Corporation, had a telephone conversation with Chairman Julius Genachowski and his chief of staff, Zachary Katz, and legal advisor, Michael Steffen, about potential modifications to the Connect America Fund (“CAF”) Phase I program.

Consistent with Windstream’s prior advocacy and the joint comments submitted by USTelecom, ITTA, and the ABC Coalition,¹ Mr. Gardner emphasized the need to ensure that only those areas that actually are served by 4/1 Mbps broadband—by an incumbent local exchange carrier and/or an unsubsidized competitor—would be excluded from eligibility for CAF Phase I support. Mr. Gardner also explained that it would expect that a majority of currently unserved² customers in an area that is enabled for 4/1 Mbps service through the CAF Phase I program actually would receive broadband speeds greater than 4/1 Mbps.

¹ See Comments of Windstream Corporation, WC Docket No. 10-90 (filed Jan. 9, 2013); Comments of the United States Telecom Association, Independent Telephone & Telecommunications Alliance, and the ABC Coalition, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 05-337 (filed Jan. 28, 2013); Reply Comments of the United States Telecom Association, the Independent Telephone & Telecommunications Alliance, and the ABC Coalition, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 05-337 (filed Feb. 11, 2013).

² See *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90, Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, at ¶ 9 (Nov. 19, 2012) (proposing to define an “unserved” area as an area lacking access to 4/1 Mbps broadband service).

Please feel free contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Malena F. Barzilai

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cc: Chairman Julius Genachowski
Zachary Katz
Michael Steffen