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August 5, 2013

Via Electronic Filing

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
455 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 08-71 (*ex parte* communication)

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Pursuant to 47 CFR § 1.1206(b), this letter is to advise you that on August 1, 2013, Michael Shultz, Vice President, Regulatory & Public Policy, of Consolidated Communications Holding Company, along with Andrew D. Lipman and the undersigned as counsel to Consolidated, met with Julie Veach, Carol Matthey, Michael Jacobs, Amy Bender, and Alexander Minard of the Wireline Competition Bureau staff to discuss two pending waiver petitions filed in the above-referenced docket.

1. By petition filed on January 24, 2013, SureWest Telephone requested a waiver of the deadline under Section 54.314(d)(1) and (d)(2) of the Commission's rules for filing a certification to receive high-cost support in 2013. Without the waiver, SureWest will not receive Interstate Common Line Support for the first and second quarters of 2013 – approximately \$2.5 million – for its ILEC study area in California.

2. By petition filed on January 11, 2013, Consolidated Communications of Fort Bend Company requested a waiver of Section 54.301(e)(1) of the Commission's Rules requiring submission of true-up data used to adjust Local Switching Support for calendar year 2011 by December 31, 2012. Without the waiver, Consolidated Fort Bend will lose an entire year's worth of LSS support – approximately \$530,000 – and will be unable to recover its local switching costs for its ILEC study area in rural Texas.

Consolidated discussed with the Staff the facts and circumstances underlying the waiver requests, as set forth in the two petitions, as well as the financial consequences to the company of further delay in resolving these issues. Consolidated noted that SureWest, in particular, has been deprived of cash flow that it had committed to fund capital investment in broadband facilities, and that it is continuing to incur borrowing costs to fund these projects in the absence of high-cost support. If the Commission does not grant the requested waiver, SureWest's ability to make all of its planned capital investments

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may be affected. Accordingly, Consolidated reiterated its request that the Commission expedite its action on these two petitions.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Russell M. Blau". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Russell M. Blau

cc: Robert Currey
Michael Shultz
Andrew D. Lipman
Julie Veach
Carol Matthey
Michael Jacobs
Amy Bender
Alexander Minard