

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Nebraska Public Service)
Commission, on its own motion, seeking to)
administer the Nebraska Universal Service) Application No. NUSF-92.05
Fund’s Broadband Program: Application)
to the Nebraska Broadband Program)
Received from Consolidated Telephone)
Company.)

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF BRIAN THOMPSON IN SUPPORT OF APPLICATION

Q. Please state your name.

A. My name is Brian Thompson.

Q. Please state your position with and the name of your current employer and provide a summary of your duties.

A. I am the Vice President of External Relations for Consolidated Telephone Company (“Consolidated”). My duties include maintaining Consolidated’s relationships with regulatory agencies, including providing information regarding the operation and deployment of Consolidated’s communication network. Further, I participate in the development and implementation of long range and short range plans to provide internet access services to customers located in our service area in Western Nebraska.

Q. Please describe the Applicant and its business.

Consolidated is a common carrier subject to the jurisdiction of the Nebraska Public Service Commission (“Commission”). Consolidated holds a certificate of public convenience and necessity issued by this Commission and operates general telecommunications businesses in Nebraska. The Commission’s September 30, 2013 Annual Report to the Legislature regarding telecommunications shows that as of December 31, 2012, Consolidated served approximately 2,400 voice lines. Consolidated

focuses on providing high speed internet and advanced telephone services to its customers in rural Nebraska.

Q. What is the purpose of your testimony?

A. My testimony is provided to support the application filed by Consolidated with the Commission seeking funding from the Nebraska Universal Service Fund Broadband Program (“Application”). The Application is incorporated in my testimony by reference.

Q. Can you please generally describe the Application?

A. Consolidated applied for the following projects:

1. Rural Hooker and Eastern Grant Counties
2. Southern Cherry County
3. Western Grant County

Of these projects, I would like to provide specific information regarding the project located in Western Grant County. Consolidated believes that the project will bring broadband service to underserved areas of the state. The Application filed by Consolidated proposes a project that will significantly improve access to high-speed broadband services. The targeted locations will be provided access to Consolidated’s broadband service packages with speeds up to 20 Mbps downstream and up to 10 Mbps upstream.

Consolidated will use a fiber-to-the-node (“FTTN”) configuration that provides a cost-effective approach for significantly enhancing broadband quality and speed. The FTTN architecture involves extending fiber from the central office and adding additional Digital Loop Carrier nodes, while replacing existing copper facilities.

Q. What is the estimate of the potential new broadband subscribers that would be created by the Application?

A. The rural area addressed by the Application covers 227 square miles in rural Nebraska and would provide service to 68 occupied census block households.

Q. Are there additional details and supporting information in the Application?

A. Yes. These details are contained in the Application filed with the Commission. Additionally, Staff requested and was provided additional information to supplement the data provided in the Application this included a summary of Consolidated's 3 requested projects in Table 5 and a breakdown of grant funding and matching funds contributed by Consolidated. There was also a numerical error on Page 3 regarding the total cost of this project that was corrected.

Q. Do you support the Staff recommendation regarding the Application?

A. Yes. I appreciate the Staff's recommendation to approve the Application and believe that the Commission should adopt the Staff's recommendation regarding the Application.

Q. Does this conclude your testimony?

A. Yes.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that on this 9th day of May, 2014, the original, five copies, and an electronic copy of the foregoing pleading was delivered to:

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Paul M. Schudel