

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

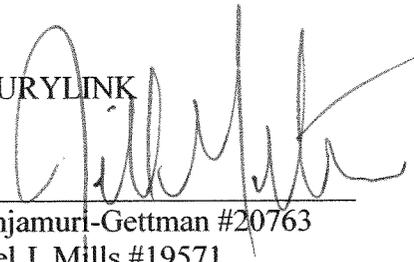
In the Matter of the Nebraska Public Service Commission, on its own motion, seeking to administer the Nebraska Universal Service Fund's Broadband Program; application to the Nebraska Broadband Program Received from Inventive Wireless of Nebraska, d/b/a Vistabeam.

Application No. NUSF-92.09

COMES NOW CenturyLink and hereby gives notice of service of the filing of the Direct Testimony of Ann Prockish in the above matters. A copy of same is attached hereto and has been served on all interested parties as indicated on the Certificate of Service.

Dated this 9th day of May, 2014.

CENTURYLINK

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1 **BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

2 **DIRECT TESTIMONY OF ANN PROCKISH**

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5 **Q. Please state your name, title, and business address.**

6 A. My name is Ann Prockish. I am employed by CenturyLink as Director – State
7 Regulatory Operations. My business address is 100 CenturyLink Drive, Monroe,
8 Louisiana 71203.

9 **Q. On whose behalf are you testifying?**

10 A. I am testifying on behalf of United Telephone Company of the West, Inc. d/b/a
11 Centurylink and Qwest Corporation, Inc., d/b/a CenturyLink QC (collectively
12 “CenturyLink”).

13 **Q. Please describe your educational background and business experience.**

14 A. I graduated in 1987 from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln with Bachelor of
15 Science degree in Business Administration with a major in Accounting. I
16 received a Master of Business Administration degree from Kansas State
17 University in 1995.

18

19 I have over 25 years of business experience in a variety of positions, with 17 years
20 in telecommunications. My career in the telecommunications industry began in
21 February 1997 as a Revenues Analyst with Sprint Corporation. I have held a
22 variety of positions of increasing responsibility since that time, including Analyst
23 – State Analysis and Reporting, Senior Administrator – State Analysis and

1 Reporting, Manager – State Analysis and Reporting, and Manager – State
2 Regulatory. In these positions I was responsible for a variety of state regulatory
3 and financial matters, including Universal Service Funding (“USF”) and Eligible
4 Telecommunications Carrier (“ETC”). I was promoted to Director, State
5 Regulatory Operations in 2009 at the time of the Embarq/CenturyTel merger. In
6 my current position I am responsible for the development and implementation of
7 regulatory and legislative policy and strategy for eight states, including Nebraska.

8 **Q. Have you testified before this Commission or any other regulatory agency?**

9 A. Yes, I have testified before this Commission and the South Carolina Public
10 Service Commission on a number of USF matters.

11 **Q. What is the purpose of your testimony?**

12 A. My testimony challenges two of the applications filed by Inventive Wireless of
13 Nebraska, LLC dba Vistabeam (“Vistabeam”) for support from the NUSF-92
14 program to fund projects to provide higher broadband speeds in areas of Morrill
15 and Scotts Bluff counties. CenturyLink already provides broadband service to a
16 portion of the proposed project areas at sufficient speeds.

17 **Q. What does Vistabeam propose?**

18 A. Vistabeam’s applications propose to use NUSF-92 support to deploy new
19 equipment to allow it to provide broadband service to customers at speeds up to 8
20 Mbps download and 2 Mbps upload. Vistabeam indicates in its applications that
21 it already provides service to customers at 3 Mbps download and 1 Mbps upload.

22 **Q. Did Vistabeam provide information regarding the specific geographic areas
23 that would be impacted by its proposal?**

1 A. Vistabeam's applications included confidential maps showing the proposed
2 coverage areas. Upon request, Vistabeam provided CenturyLink with the census
3 blocks that would be impacted by its proposed projects.

4 **Q. What did CenturyLink's review of the census block data reveal?**

5 A. I compared the census block data received from Vistabeam to the census blocks
6 where CenturyLink currently provides service at download speeds of 3 Mbps or
7 greater. For the Morrill application, I found 240 census blocks where Vistabeam
8 proposed to expand or upgrade service, but where CenturyLink already provided
9 broadband service at sufficient speeds. For the Scotts Bluff application, there
10 were 429 census blocks that had overlap between Vistabeam's proposal and
11 CenturyLink's current service capabilities.

12 **Q. How many census blocks will be impacted by Vistabeam's applications in
13 these two counties?**

14 A. Vistabeam's applications for Morrill and Scotts Bluff counties cover 1,002 and
15 2,508 census blocks respectively. CenturyLink offers broadband service at
16 sufficient speeds in 24% of the census blocks in the Morrill county application
17 and 17% of the census blocks in the Scotts Bluff county application.

18 **Q. What other concerns does CenturyLink have with Vistabeam's applications?**

19 A. Vistabeam indicates in its applications that it is already providing service in the
20 proposed areas at 3 Mbps download and 1 Mbps upload speeds, and the requested
21 funding would allow it to deploy equipment to provide speeds up to 8 Mbps
22 download and 2 Mbps upload. NUSF-92 funding is to be targeted to provide
23 service at 4 Mbps download and 1 Mbps upload speeds to areas that currently are

1 unable to receive broadband at those speeds. Given the fixed budget for NUSF-
2 92 projects, CenturyLink questions whether it is consistent with the
3 Commission's goals to award funds to projects that upgrade customers that have
4 existing broadband available at speeds that already approach those required by the
5 program when there remain customers without broadband or broadband at
6 significantly slower speeds.

7 **Q. Would Vistabeam's projects reach customers that are currently unserved at**
8 **this time?**

9 A. Vistabeam's applications indicate that its proposed project areas include some
10 areas that are currently unserved; however the applications did not provide any
11 information on the number of households that are currently unserved and would
12 be able to obtain service as a result of these projects.

13 **Q. If CenturyLink were to prevail in its challenge, these customers would**
14 **continue to without broadband service, correct?**

15 A. That is difficult to say. If Vistabeam's applications were denied, it simply means
16 that Vistabeam would not receive any NUSF-92 funding to upgrade its service in
17 Morrill and Scotts Bluff counties. These customers may be able to receive service
18 from Vistabeam at the current speeds of 3 Mbps download and 1 Mbps upload. It
19 is difficult to determine from the information provided by Vistabeam where the
20 unserved areas are or how many customers may not be able to obtain broadband
21 service from Vistabeam or any other carrier.

22 **Q. Did CenturyLink discuss its concerns with Vistabeam?**

1 A. Yes. CenturyLink provided a list of the overlap census blocks to Vistabeam and
2 indicated that it had concerns that Vistabeam's proposed projects would provide
3 service to areas where broadband service was already available at sufficient
4 speeds. CenturyLink asked Vistabeam if it would consider modifying its Morrill
5 and Scotts Bluff applications to remove the disputed census blocks. Vistabeam
6 declined to do so.

7 **Q. What is your recommendation?**

8 A. Staff has recommended approval of the Morrill and Scotts Bluff applications from
9 Vistabeam. CenturyLink recommends that, should the Commission approve these
10 applications, it reduce the award amount to remove funding associated with
11 investment that would upgrade customer radio equipment in the census blocks
12 where Vistabeam and CenturyLink already provide service at sufficient speeds.
13 The Commission should approve Vistabeam's applications on the condition that
14 Vistabeam use any funding granted only in areas where customers are currently
15 unserved or underserved, and not in areas where Vistabeam already offers
16 broadband at 3 Mbps download and 1 Mbps upload, or where CenturyLink
17 already offers qualifying service. With this adjustment, CenturyLink's concerns
18 with providing funds in areas where it already provides broadband service at
19 sufficient speeds are addressed, yet customers in areas where there is no
20 broadband service currently would have the opportunity to receive service from
21 Vistabeam.

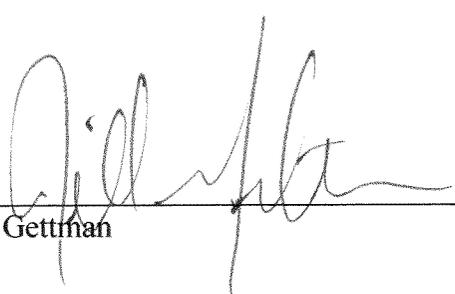
22 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

23 A. Yes.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that on the 9th day of May 2014, a true and correct copy of the Direct Testimony of Ann Prockish on behalf of CenturyLink was provided to the following interested persons by electronic mail as follows:

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