

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 Consolidated Telephone)
Company.)

Application No. NUSF-92.21

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, 2014 Annual Report to the Legislature regarding telecommunications shows that as of

December 31, 2013, Consolidated served approximately 2,350 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 requested funding for a broadband project located in rural Whitman, Nebraska (the "Project"). Consolidated believes that the Project will bring broadband service to underserved areas of the state. The Application filed by Consolidated proposes a cost-efficient project that will significantly improve access to high-speed broadband services for the households located in the Census Blocks identified in the Application. 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 downstream. 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 to existing Broadband capable nodes, upgrading node electronics and replacing existing copper facilities. This area was last upgraded with Digital node equipment over 10 years ago. Due to the age of the hardware and software at these node sites, and limited copper capacity, customers can only achieve speeds of less than 1 Mbps today.

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 435 square miles in rural Nebraska and would provide greater than 4 x 1 Mbps service to 82 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.

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.

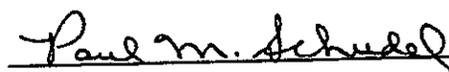
Q. Does this conclude your testimony?

A. Yes.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that on this 16th day of June, 2015, the original, five copies, and an electronic copy of the foregoing pleading was delivered to:

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Paul M. Schudel