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May 6, 2013

Ms. Barcy McNeal  
Secretary, Docketing Division  
Public Utilities Commission of Ohio  
180 East Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3793

Re: In the Matter of the Commission's Oversight Concerning the Ohio  
Small Local Exchange Carriers Association  
PUCO Case No. 97-414-TP-UNC

Dear Ms. McNeal:

On behalf of the members of the Ohio Telecom Association ("OTA"), please accept this letter in support of the Petition of the Ohio Small Local Exchange Carrier Association ("OSLECA") to discontinue its operation through a merger into the Northwest Ohio Independent Telecommunications Association, Inc. ("NWOITA"). The OSLECA petition was filed on May 3, 2013 in Public Utilities Commission of Ohio ("PUCO") Case No. 97-414-TP-UNC, *In the Matter of the Commission's Oversight Concerning the Ohio Small Local Exchange Carrier Association*.

This request for merger approval is consistent with previous PUCO action in this matter. On February 12, 1997, the PUCO issued a Finding and Order in its access charge proceeding (Case No. 83-464-TP-COI) approving the creation of OSLECA and transferring responsibility to it from the Ohio Telecommunications Advisory Board ("OTAB").

OSLECA's merger into NWOITA will again provide the appropriate business framework to serve their customers who depend on rural telecommunications service in Ohio. Since 2008, NWOITA and its members have served to promote the business of telecommunications services, including broadband deployment, to their customers and to do so with reliable services at affordable prices. The PUCO's approval of this merger, along with the transfer of the remaining OSLECA operating fund monies, will serve to benefit and continue this important telecommunications and economic development tool for rural Ohio.

Ohio's small telephone companies, like all telecom providers, face an ever changing competitive environment. Throughout their regulatory heritage, they have lived within a system that allowed them to serve their customers with the latest communications services possible. Advances in new technology and a variety of evolutionary regulatory schemes challenge not only the companies, but their customers as well. With the PUCO's approval of this request, NWOITA and its member companies will continue to serve as an important element in Ohio's telecommunications infrastructure and economy.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles R. Moses". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Charles" and last name "Moses" clearly distinguishable.

Charles R. Moses  
President  
Ohio Telecom Association

**This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities**

**Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on**

**5/6/2013 8:55:01 AM**

**in**

**Case No(s). 97-0414-TP-UNC**

Summary: Correspondence of the Ohio Telecom Association in support of the Petition of OSLECA to discontinue its operation through a merger into NWOITA electronically filed by Scott E. Elisar on behalf of Ohio Telecom Association