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**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

IN RE

THE PETITION THE TOLEDO
TELEPHONE CO., INC. FOR A RULE
EXEMPTION

DOCKET NO.

DECLARATION OF DALE MERTEN

1. I am the Chief Operation Officer of The Toledo Telephone Co., Inc. (“Toledo”), am over the age of 18 and a citizen of the state of Washington. I make this Declaration in that capacity.
2. Through an unfortunate series of miscommunications, Toledo was not able to file its Petition for Support from the Washington State Universal Service Communications Program in a timely fashion.
3. Because Toledo missed the deadline contained in the Commission’s rules, Toledo thought that it would not be able to file a Petition for Support. Subsequently, I learned that it was possible to obtain an exemption from the filing date. Upon learning of that possibility, me and my staff immediately set about to finish the Petition for Support and now have done so.
4. Toledo has built a fiber optic network that provides broadband support of up to a gigabyte service throughout its service territory. In doing so, Toledo has undertaken a tremendous debt load that must be repaid in order for broadband service to continue to be provided. In

1 addition, there are ongoing maintenance requirements to maintain the network in its current
2 condition.

3 5. In addition, Toledo has become a community that is desirable for people to relocate to. This
4 is largely a function of the broadband network that is available. New houses are being built
5 all the time. The new construction requires that Toledo continue to expand its network to be
6 able to continue to have a one hundred percent coverage in its service territory.

7 6. The company has two affilliates, Toldeo Telentet that is the affliliate that conducts internet
8 access (middle mile) and internet service. And Toledo Telenet Long Distance that conducts
9 billing for long distance customers.

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11 This Declaration is signed this 2nd day of October, 2020, under penalty of perjury as set out in
12 RCW 9A.72.085.

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15 By



16 Dale Merten
17 VP/COO
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