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**Mark S. Reynolds**  
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Public Policy

**May 7, 2014**

*Via Web Portal  
And Overnight delivery*

Mr. Steven V. King, Executive Director and Secretary  
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission  
1300 S. Evergreen Park Drive SW  
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

**Re: Docket UT-971140**  
*CenturyLink's Comments on the Commission's Proposal to  
Terminate the Traditional USF in Washington Utilities and  
Transportation Commission v. Washington Exchange Carrier  
Association, et al.*

Dear Mr. King:

On April 4, 2014 the Commission issued a notice of opportunity to file written comments in conjunction with its proposal to terminate the Washington Exchange Carrier Association's (WECA) Washington Carrier Access Plan created in Docket U-85-23 ("Traditional USF") as part of its implementation of 2E2SHB 1971 regarding the establishment of a state universal communication service program in Docket UT-131239. Accordingly, CenturyLink provides the following comments.

### **CenturyLink Comments**

Certain CenturyLink operating companies currently receive distributions from the WECA Traditional USF. By the terms of 2E2SHB 1971, CenturyLink does not meet the parameters for USF distributions from the USF program the Commission will establish to implement the legislation. Consequently, termination of the Traditional USF will result in the termination of the distributions CenturyLink currently receives with no alternative state USF funding source.

On July 2, 2012, the Commission issued Order No. 1 in Docket UT-120853 that included the following findings:

*After an examination of the proposed tariff revisions and request for confirmation filed by WECA on June 8, 2012, as modified, and giving consideration to all relevant matters*

*and for good cause shown, the Commission finds that the proposed tariff revision should become effective July 3, 2012, on an LSN basis; and that the TUSF element charge by WECA member companies and other local exchange carriers, is **currently in effect** as a universal service element. (emphasis added).<sup>1</sup>*

*The Traditional Universal Service Fund (TUSF) which is currently \$.00152 per minute is a universal service support element previously adopted by the Commission in Docket U-85-23, and should continue to be assessed and remitted to Washington Exchange Carrier Association and is not an access element that will be terminated or otherwise modified under the FCC's order No. 11-161. However, the Commission retains the right to examine the appropriateness of the TUSF element in light of future changes the telecommunications industry.<sup>2</sup>*

If the Commission had ruled that the Traditional USF rate element was an access element in the cited Order, CenturyLink would have been able to include the element in the prescribed phase-down of intrastate switched access rates under the FCC's Order No. 11-161 and received some degree of revenue replacement for the phase down through the transitional Access Recovery Charge (ARC). CenturyLink believes that the termination of the Traditional USF access pool constitutes an end to the designation of the Traditional USF rate element as a universal service support element. CenturyLink therefore requests that in its Order terminating the WECA pool that the Commission makes a finding that because the WECA pools is no longer available to provide universal service support, the Traditional USF rate element is an access element subject to the FCC Order No. 11-161 transitional requirements.

Sincerely,

/s/ *Mark S. Reynolds*  
Mark S. Reynolds

MSR/jga

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<sup>1</sup> Commission Order No. 1 in Docket UT-120853, issued July 2, 2012 – see paragraph 17.

<sup>2</sup> Commission Order No. 1 in Docket UT-120853, issued July 2, 2012 – see paragraph 19.