



maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services supported by federal universal service, are provided on Exhibit B hereto as part of the Company's current Two-Year Plan associated with ARSD § 20:10:32:54(1). Consistent with federal universal service principles, the Company will use federal universal service support amounts thus far received in 2016 to meet the objectives identified in its service quality improvement plans and will continue to do so with respect to universal service amounts received in 2017. This use of federal universal service support will enable the Company to: (1) maintain rates for its local exchange services that are affordable and reasonably comparable to rates being charged for the same services in urban areas; and (2) to upgrade its telecommunications facilities and equipment as necessary to meet evolving service requirements, including those related to broadband services, and maintain high quality service. The use of federal universal service support for these purposes is clearly consistent with the federal universal service provisions.

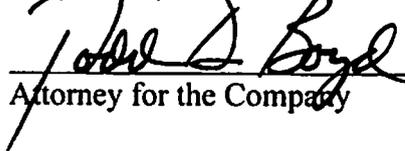
3. Attached as Exhibit C to this Application is a copy of the Company's FCC Form 481 as required by the FCC pursuant to 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.313 and 54.422. The information in this Exhibit, specifically as set forth on lines 220, 300-330 and 400-450, meets the state requirements established by ARSD §§ 20:10:32:54(3), 20:10:32:54(4) and 20:10:32:54(5).

4. Lastly, also attached is Exhibit D a document containing those certifications required under the provisions of ARSD §§ 20:10:32:54(6) and 20:10:32:54(7). The remaining ETC certification rule provisions found in ARSD §§ 20:10:32:54(8) and 20:10:32:54(9) have by Order been waived by this Commission.

5. Based on all of the foregoing information, including all information provided within Exhibits A, B, C and D (attached hereto), the Company requests that this Commission issue an appropriate certification to the FCC and USAC indicating that the Company is in compliance with 47 U.S.C. § 254(e) and should receive all federal universal service support determined for distribution to the Company in 2017. In order to ensure that this certification is issued to the FCC prior to October 1, 2016, the Company would further ask the Commission to expedite the process, to the extent needed to meet such deadline.

Dated this 24<sup>th</sup> day of June 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Attorney for the Company