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July 19, 2017

Susan S. Geiger, Esq.  
Orr & Reno  
45 South Main Street  
Concord, NH 03302-3550

Re: DT 16-872, Consolidated Communications Holdings, Inc.  
Joint Petition for Findings in Furtherance of the Acquisition of FairPoint Communications, Inc. and its  
New Hampshire Operating Subsidiaries  
Granting Motion for Protective Order and Confidential Treatment

Dear Ms. Geiger:

On July 5, 2017, Consolidated Communications Holdings, Inc. (CCHI) filed a Motion for Protective Order and Confidential Treatment (Motion) with respect to the list of key Consolidated-FairPoint employees associated with FairPoint-NNE's Wholesale Services Group as of July 3, 2017, which was the closing date of CCHI's acquisition through merger of FairPoint. No objection to the Motion was filed within the ten-day period provided for under N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.07(e).

The key employee list was provided by CCHI to Commission Staff and the Labor Intervenors in accordance with Section II.4 of the Revised Settlement Agreement approved by the Commission in Order No. 26, 022 (May 31, 2017). Pursuant to that section of the approved Revised Settlement Agreement, CCHI was required to "identify those key employees for Staff and Labor Intervenors *under confidential protection* within 48 hours after the date the Merger Transaction closes." (emphasis added)

The Commission has reviewed the Motion and has determined that the key employee list represents "confidential, commercial, or financial information" exempt from public disclosure under RSA 91-A:5, IV and Puc 203.08. Based on the applicable three-step balancing test, as described in Order No. 26,040 (July 11, 2017) at 9, the Commission determined that the key employee list meets the standards for exemption from public disclosure and should be afforded confidential treatment, as it is non-public, commercially-sensitive operational information of a company engaged in a competitive industry subject to limited state regulation.

Accordingly, CCHI's Motion for Protective Order and Confidential Treatment filed on July 5, 2017 has been granted.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debra A. Howland".

Debra A. Howland  
Executive Director

cc: Docket File/Service List