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For Immediate Release

Windstream Communications Accepts Nearly \$175 Million in Annual Support from Connect America Fund to Expand and Support Broadband for Over 800,000 Rural Americans

Washington, D.C. (Aug. 5, 2015) – Windstream Communications Inc. has accepted \$174,895,478 in annual, ongoing support from the Connect America Fund to expand and support broadband for over 800,000 of its rural customers in 17 states.

The Connect America Fund support will enable Windstream to deliver broadband at speeds of at least 10 Mbps for downloads and 1 Mbps uploads to over 404,000 homes and businesses in its rural service areas nationwide where the cost of broadband deployment might otherwise be prohibitive.

“Windstream’s decision to accept support from the Connect America Fund will greatly benefit its rural customers by expanding robust broadband in their communities,” said FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler. “The Connect America Fund is delivering on its promise of ensuring that all Americans have access to the opportunities provided by modern broadband service, no matter where they live.”

Below is a state-by-state list of the amount of annual support provided and number of homes and businesses served:

CAFII - Final Adopted Model for Offer of Model - Based Support to Price Cap Carriers - CAM 4.3	Homes and Businesses Supported	Support Amount by State
Windstream Total	404,625	\$ 174,895,478
AL	1,889	\$ 511,038
AR	32,312	\$ 13,163,783
FL	17,891	\$ 5,236,626
GA	64,721	\$ 24,867,807
IA	44,930	\$ 28,672,554
KY	62,070	\$ 21,576,987
MN	4,440	\$ 1,519,855

MO	27,509	\$	14,187,910
MS	2,760	\$	917,403
NC	6,988	\$	1,952,082
NE	21,560	\$	13,591,437
NY	5,210	\$	1,557,976
OH	13,073	\$	4,154,270
OK	16,741	\$	7,788,213
PA	34,807	\$	13,001,364
SC	3,144	\$	935,383
TX	44,580	\$	21,260,790

Like telephone service in the 20th Century, broadband has become essential to life in the 21st Century. But, according to the FCC’s latest Broadband Progress Report, nearly one in three rural Americans lack access to 10/1 broadband, compared to only one in 100 urban Americans. The Connect America Fund is designed to close that rural-urban digital divide.

The FCC’s traditional universal service program succeeded in ensuring telephone network coverage in rural America by providing subsidies where the cost of service would otherwise be prohibitive. In late 2011, the FCC modernized the program to support networks capable of providing broadband and voice services, and created the Connect America Fund to efficiently and effectively administer that support to expand broadband in rural areas where market forces alone can’t support expansion.

Since then, Phase I of Connect America has provided \$438 million, including over \$87.3 million to Windstream, to expand broadband to nearly 1.7 million people in over 637,000 rural homes and businesses in 45 states and Puerto Rico. Over the next six years, Phase II of Connect America will provide more than \$10 billion to expand broadband-capable networks throughout rural America nationwide, all without increasing the cost of the program to ratepayers.

In addition to Windstream, Frontier Communications Inc. has also accepted Phase II funding, which will expand service to 1.3 million Frontier customers in 28 states. Overall, the FCC’s Universal Service Fund allocates \$4.5 billion annually through various universal service programs for high-cost areas to support voice- and broadband-capable networks in rural America.

Carriers receiving Connect America Fund support must build out broadband to 40% of funded locations by the end 2017, 60% by end of 2018, and 100% by the end of 2020.

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