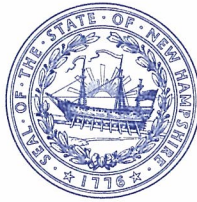


STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

CONSUMER ADVOCATE  
Meredith A. Hatfield, Esq.

ASSISTANT CONSUMER ADVOCATE  
Rorie E.P. Hollenberg, Esq.



TDD Access: Relay NH  
1-800-735-2964

Tel. (603) 271-1172

Website:  
[www.oca.nh.gov](http://www.oca.nh.gov)

OFFICE OF CONSUMER ADVOCATE

21 S. Fruit St., Suite 18  
Concord, NH 03301-2429

August 24, 2011

Debra Howland  
Executive Director & Secretary  
New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission  
21 S. Fruit Street, Suite 10  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301-7319

RE: DT 11-151 Merrimack County Telephone Company  
Petition for an Alternative Form of Regulation



Dear Ms. Howland:

I am writing to notify the Commission that the Office of the Consumer Advocate (OCA) is not available for the final hearing in the above-reference docket on August 25, 2011, and that we have no objection to the hearing being held that day.

As Mr. Phillips stated in his cover letter to the settlement agreement filed on August 15, 2011, the OCA is not a party to the settlement agreement, and we take no position on TDS's proposed alternative regulation plan. As Mr. Phillips also noted, we do support the additions to the plan regarding the rate freeze for basic local exchange service and the provisions related to Lifeline/Link-Up. We believe that these changes make the MCT plan more consistent with the existing alternative regulation plans of other New Hampshire TDS affiliates and we thank the Company for its willingness to include them in the settlement agreement. We also thank Commission Staff and NH Legal Assistance for their efforts with regard to those issues.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information. Thank you for your assistance.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Hatfield".

Meredith A. Hatfield  
Consumer Advocate

cc: Service List via electronic mail