

Consolidated Communications Holdings, Inc.

Docket No. DT 23-103

Date Request Received: 03/27/2024

Date of Response: 04/10/2024

Request No.: 1-01

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Request from: NH Department of Energy

Witness: Michael Shultz

How many customers do Licensees (Consolidated Communications of Northern New England and Consolidated Communications of Maine) currently serve in New Hampshire? How many premises do the Licensees currently offer fiber services to in New Hampshire? Of those, how many are fiber customers?

Response: Please see Highly Confidential Attachment NH DOE DR-1-1. Consolidated has a good faith basis for seeking confidential treatment of this document pursuant to N.H. Code Admin. R. Ann. Puc. 203.08(d); Consolidated intends to submit a motion for confidential treatment regarding this document at or before the commencement of the hearing in the proceedings.

CONFIDENTIAL

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**Consolidated Communications Holdings, Inc.
DOE Data Request 1-1**

New Hampshire Copper and Fiber locations and subscribers

Fiber

<u>Locations</u>	<u>Subscribers</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Copper

<u>Locations</u>	<u>Subscribers *</u>
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

* [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

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Date Request Received: 03/27/2024

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Request No.: 1-02

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Request from: NH Department of Energy

Witness: Michael Shultz

Reference Petition, Page 11. The Petitioners state:

The proposed Transaction will benefit residents and business in New Hampshire as it will facilitate infrastructure investment, technological development, and economic expansion. Indeed, as Witness Shultz explains, issuing the findings requested in the Petition and approving the Transaction will allow CCHI to continue its multi-pronged fiber expansion strategy and position itself to become a leading fiber provider across the United States.

Please describe how NH consumers will benefit from this expansion and provide examples of the infrastructure investment, technological development, and economic expansion that will result from the proposed transaction. If the Commission does not approve the proposed transaction, would the Petitioners be able to continue the multi-pronged fiber expansion strategy in New Hampshire? Please explain in detail why or why not.

Response: CCHI has expanded the number of locations to which it offers fiber service and plans to further expand its network by leveraging consumer fiber buildouts, including in New Hampshire. Network expansion will allow CCHI to further close the digital divide by continuing to bring broadband services to underserved and unserved communities across rural portions of its New Hampshire markets. CCHI's network expansion will also improve the reliability of the network, benefitting consumers. CCHI has not identified any New Hampshire specific infrastructure investment, technological development, and economic expansion that it will implement post-closing.

If the Commission does not approve the proposed transaction, the Petitioners multi-pronged fiber expansion strategy in New Hampshire would be significantly delayed.

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Date Request Received: 03/27/2024

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Request from: NH Department of Energy

Witness: Michael Shultz

Reference page 7 of the testimony of Michael Shultz, lines 11 – 21.

a. Please identify and describe plans to “expand commercial services and carrier solutions by leveraging consumer fiber buildouts to provide greater access to high-speed broadband and additional resiliency and reliability benefits for all services offered over the networks, including regulated voice service” for New Hampshire.

b. Please also identify and describe any plans specific to New Hampshire related to the plan to “expand 1 Gbps (gigabit-per-second) broadband coverage in its current network topography and improve operational efficiency across its approximately 59,000 fiber route miles and two million fiber strand miles.”

Response:

- a. The Joint Petitioners have not yet planned or identified any specific projects that will be implemented in New Hampshire post-closing.**
- b. The company-wide build plan includes the upgrade of approximately 1.6 million passings to fiber, which will enable multi-Gigabit-capable services to over 70% of CCHI’s passings across the Consolidated footprint. As stated above, the Joint Petitioners have not yet planned or identified any specific projects that will be implemented in New Hampshire post-closing.**

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Request from: NH Department of Energy

Witness: Michael Shultz

Please confirm that the proposed transaction will not change in any way the level of service currently being provided by CNNE to New Hampshire's E-911 PSAPs. If unable to confirm, please describe any anticipated changes in detail.

Response: As explained in the Petition, because the Transaction is structured as a change of ownership in the holding company, it will not affect any of the operations of the Licensees. Accordingly, the transaction should not change in any way the level of service currently being provided by CNNE to New Hampshire's E-911 PSAPs.

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Request from: NH Department of Energy

Witness: Michael Shultz

Reference Testimony of Andrew Frey, Exhibit A. Please provide an organization chart for the management of CCHI, CCI, CCNE, CCM, and CCES pre- and post-merger, including names and positions.

Response: Consolidated Communications Enterprise Services, Inc. (“CCES”) employs all individuals working on behalf of CCHI and its subsidiaries. Consolidated’s management and overall business unit structure based on its executive management may be found at: <https://ir.consolidated.com/governance/executive-management/default.aspx>.

No change is anticipated in the pre-merger organization of Consolidated’s business units after closing. To the extent the Department requires additional information, Consolidated is willing to work with the Department to assist it in understanding Consolidated’s overall structure. However, much of this information is competitively sensitive and should not be provided to Consolidated’s competitors.

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Request from: NH Department of Energy

Witness: Michael Shultz

What level of managerial oversight does CCHI currently employ over CCNE, CCM and CCES entities in New Hampshire. Please describe in detail how that is expected to change following this proposed transaction?

Response: As explained in the Petition, because the Transaction is structured as a change of ownership in the holding company, it will not affect any of the operations of the Licensees. Accordingly, the Transaction will not change CCHI's operation of its subsidiary Licensees. CCHI provides managerial oversight of CCNE, CCM, and CCES. There are no plans to change the management and operation of CCNE, CCM, and CCES, ensuring that their managerial, technical, and operational standards will be maintained.

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Request from: NH Department of Energy

Witness: Michael Shultz

Please describe any potential changes to CNNE Operational Support System (OSS) platform as a result of the proposed acquisition.

Response: As explained in the Petition, because the Transaction is structured as a change of ownership in the holding company, it will not affect any of the operations of the Licensees. Accordingly, there are no planned changes to the CNNE Operational Support System (OSS) platform as a result of the proposed acquisition.

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Request from: NH Department of Energy

Witness: Michael Shultz

Pleased describe any potential changes to the CNNE Wholesale Operations OSS interface change management process as a result of the proposed acquisition?

Response: As explained in the Petition, because the Transaction is structured as a change of ownership in the holding company, it will not affect any of the operations of the Licensees. Accordingly, there are no planned changes to the CNNE Wholesale Operations OSS interface change management process as a result of the proposed acquisition.

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Request from: NH Department of Energy

Witness: Michael Shultz

Please describe any potential changes to or impact on the CNNE ordering process for the various services provided to ELECS (CLECS) as a result of the proposed acquisition.

Response: As explained in the Petition, because the Transaction is structured as a change of ownership in the holding company, it will not affect any of the operations of the Licensees. Accordingly, there is no planned change to or expected impact on the CNNE ordering process for the various services provided to ELECS (CLECS) as a result of the proposed acquisition.

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Request from: NH Department of Energy

Witness: Michael Shultz

Please describe any potential changes to or impact on the current CNNE escalation procedures and contacts for ELEC (CLEC) issues as a result of the proposed acquisition.

Response: As explained in the Petition, because the Transaction is structured as a change of ownership in the holding company, it will not affect any of the operations of the Licensees. Accordingly, there is no planned potential change to or impact on the current CNNE escalation procedures and contacts for ELEC (CLEC) issues as a result of the proposed acquisition.

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Request from: NH Department of Energy

Witness: Michael Shultz

Please describe any changes or reductions to key staff in the CNNE wholesale services group as a result of the proposed transaction.

Response: As explained in the Petition, because the Transaction is structured as a change of ownership in the holding company, it will not affect any of the operations of the Licensees. Accordingly, no changes or reductions to key staff in the CNNE wholesale services group are expected as a result of the proposed transaction.

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Request from: NH Department of Energy

Witness: Michael Shultz

Are changes to interconnection agreements anticipated as a result of the proposed transaction? If yes, please describe those anticipated changes in detail.

Response: As explained in the Petition, because the Transaction is structured as a change of ownership in the holding company, it will not affect any of the operations of the Licensees. Accordingly, no changes to interconnection agreements are anticipated as a result of the proposed transaction; any changes to such agreements in the future would be made in accordance with the amendment terms in applicable agreements.

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Request from: NH Department of Energy

Witness: Michael Shultz

Reference testimony of Michael Shultz, page 7, lines 7-8 and page 8, lines 2-5. Please identify how much new additional capital is expected to be invested in New Hampshire as a result of the proposed acquisition over the next 5 years?

Response: The Joint Petitioners anticipate that additional capital will be made available to CCHI, which will allocate the funds among its various operating subsidiaries (including in New Hampshire), as appropriate. The Joint Petitioners have not yet planned or identified the costs associated with any specific projects that will be implemented in New Hampshire post-closing.

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Request from: NH Department of Energy

Witness: Michael Shultz

Please explain how CCI's parent debt is assigned to its subsidiaries in New Hampshire, that is CCNE, CCM, and CCES.

Response: CCI has not assigned any debt to its subsidiaries. The borrower under CCHI debt facilities is CCI; CCNE, CCM, and CCES are not borrowers. However, CCNE, CCM, and CCES guaranteed CCI's debt and pledged their New Hampshire utility assets as security for the refinancing of CCI's debt.