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Dear Secretary,

The UIU has found over the years that a negotiated settlement among litigating parties is almost always

superior to a decision imposed upon the parties. Accordingly, we look with favor upon the proposed restart of negotiations in this proceeding even though the UIU is not privy to what the parties seeking to restart negotiations have in mind.

These parties have requested a one-month extension of the current briefing dates regarding the RD. Ordinarily, this length of time would be reasonable. However, as noted in the letter filed today on behalf of the NYSTA Smaller ILECS, the litigated and (previous) settlement positions of the parties developed over the last two years are so well known that extending the filing deadline by four weeks at this time is unnecessary. The UIU is also mindful that at least two of the parties seeking the extension filed comments opposing the temporary extension of the TF.

The UIU supports the recommendations of the NYSTA Smaller ILECS for a two-week extension of the current briefing dates as well as the appointment of ALJ Stein as settlement judge to assist the parties in spending our time and resources in an effective and efficient manner.

Sincerely,
Saul A. Rigberg