

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Loretel Systems, Inc.  
2020 High-Cost Universal Service Support  
Annual Report

Case No. PU-20-267

AFFIDAVIT OF SERVICE BY CERTIFIED MAIL

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA  
COUNTY OF BURLEIGH

Geralyn R. Schmaltz deposes and says that:

she is over the age of 18 years and not a party to this action and, on the **21st day of April 2022**, she deposited in the United States Mail, at Bismarck, North Dakota, **one** envelope with certified postage, return receipt requested, fully prepaid, securely sealed and containing a photocopy of:

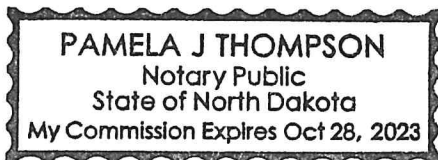
- **Order on Protection of Information**

The envelope was addressed as follows:

Thomas Campbell  
Olsen Theilen, Ltd  
2675 Long Lake Road North  
Roseville, MN 55113-1117  
**Cert. No. 7021 2720 0001 0491 9195**

The address shown is the respective addressee's last reasonably ascertainable post office address.

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
this **21st day of April 2022**.



SEAL

Two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The top signature is "Geralyn R. Schmaltz" and the bottom signature is "Pamela J. Thompson". Below the bottom signature is the printed text "Notary Public".

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**ORDER ON PROTECTION OF INFORMATION**

**APRIL 13, 2022**

On August 24, 2020, Loretel Systems, Inc. (the company) filed an application for a protective order under North Dakota Administrative Code Section 69-02-09 for protecting against public disclosure protected information as defined by North Dakota Century Code Section 47-25.1-01(4).

The information requested to be considered trade secret/confidential is Exhibit A, which contains a description and the amount of high-cost universal service support received by the company in 2019 and a description of how that support was used for the provision, maintenance, or upgrading of the company's facilities and services; an estimate of the amount of federal high-cost universal service support the company anticipates receiving in 2020 and a description of how that support is projected to be used for the provision, maintenance, or upgrading of the company's facilities and services pursuant to Section 254 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996; detailed information regarding the telecommunications infrastructure projects completed during 2019 and those forecasted for 2021; and detailed information of each outage over 30 minutes in duration experienced by the company in its ETC-designated service area in 2019, including the geographic area, the start and end time, a description, the resolution, the services affected, the number of customers affected, and steps taken to prevent similar situations, filed with the

North Dakota Public Service Commission ("Commission"). North Dakota Administrative Code Section 69-02-09-03 requires that Commission staff examine the information and application and make a recommendation to the Commission.

The information provided by the company is also provided to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and is treated as confidential by the FCC. The Commission has previously treated information that is provided to the FCC and treated by the FCC as confidential information as protected information and cites to PU-07-595. Staff recommended information in that case acknowledged the North Dakota Attorney General has interpreted that N.D.C.C. §44-04-18(1) regarding protected information allows a state agency to provide confidentiality to protection of information if the information is specifically protected under federal regulation. Additionally, North Dakota Administrative Rules (N.D.A.R.) 69-02-09-13(5) state that financial information required by the FCC be copied to the Commission, accompanied by the filing of a copy of the FCC's protective order for that information.

Additionally, under N.D.C.C. 44-04-18.4(2)(d) the information which the company is requesting protection for qualifies as "trade secret" as it is information that is compiled that would derive independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons that can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use; and is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain the secrecy of the information.

The application satisfies the requirements of the North Dakota Century Code for protection of information, and the information requested to be protected derives

independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use; and is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy.

**Order**

The Commission orders:

1. The specified information be withheld from public disclosure and the Public Service Commission website.
2. That availability to the specified information be limited to the Administrative Law Judge, the Commission, counsel, and Staff assigned to the captioned case.

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

  
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Randy Christmann                      Julie Fedorchak                      Sheri Haugen-Hoffart  
Commissioner                              Chair                              Commissioner