



November 23, 2022

Mr. Steve Kahl, Executive Director
North Dakota Public Service Commission
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 408
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480

RE: Informal Complaints against Bright Sound Communications, Inc. (Dockets PU-22-393.1 and PU-22-393.2)

Dear Mr. Kahl:

West River Telecommunications Cooperative ("WRTC") provides this letter to the North Dakota Public Service Commission (Commission) to express its support for the above referenced informal complaints filed by Northwest Communications Cooperative (NCC) and the Feickert Drilling Company against Bright Sound Communications, Inc., (Bright Sound). Much like NCC and other rural incumbent local exchange carriers doing business in the State, WRTC provides various telephone and broadband related services to customers within its service area footprint. This includes long distance services, where WRTC serves as the preferred or "presubscribed interexchange carrier" ("PIC") for its voice service customers.

WRTC currently provides its' long distance services to Feickert Drilling. Prior to submitting her complaints to this Commission and the North Dakota Attorney General's office, WRTC member and Feickert Drilling co-owner, Karen Feickert, also contacted WRTC informing our customer service personnel that a Bright Sound representative had called her claiming that: (1) Bright Sound was connected with WRTC; (2) that WRTC was no longer providing long distance services; and (3) that for this reason the customer should authorize Bright Sound to be their long distance provider. WRTC is able to confirm and support the statements made by Karen Feickert in her letter of October 24, 2022, directed to the attention of Victor Schock. As WRTC earlier informed Ms. Feickert, none of the statements made by the Bright Sound representative concerning WRTC are true. WRTC's long distance for Feickert Drilling is still active, and it appears that Bright Sound has been falsely billing Feickert Drilling for a long distance service never actually provided.

Similar to what has been experienced by NCC and other rural telephone companies relating to Bright Sound, WRTC has also been contacted by a number of its long distance customers, notably business customers, beginning in May of this year and continuing into October, and informed of calls received from Bright Sound representatives who falsely claimed a connection to or affiliation with WRTC for the purpose of improperly obtaining customer permission for subscription to and/or billing for Bright Sound long distance. These customers contacted WRTC to report the

call they had received from Bright Sound because they were understandably suspicious that they were being “scammed” into signing up for Bright Sound’s services.

Given the more recent referenced customer contact relating to Bright Sound it received in October 2022, WRTC worries that Bright Sound may still be engaged in deceptive business practices aimed at improperly generating billings for its long distance services. WRTC therefore supports and joins NCC in its request to the Commission for an immediate investigation into Bright Sound’s activities and the immediate issuance of a cease and desist order preventing the company from engaging in any further marketing and/or sales activity in the State.

If upon review of this letter, the Commission would like more information concerning the specifics of our communications with customers as it relates to Bright Sound, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thank you for your prompt attention to these matters.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. Schilling', is positioned above the typed name.

Troy Schilling, CEO/General Manager
West River Telecommunications Cooperative