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NORTH FLORIDA WOMEN'S RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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Director

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FPSC - Records/Reporting

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am preparing this statement for the Public Service Commission hearing on the proposed phone service change for Dog Island because I cannot be present at the hearing.

I have worked very diligently to support the wishes of the telephone customers of Dog Island along with Chief Becker Boatenreiter of the Dog Island Volunteer Fire Department.

You have in your possession the petition of the many people who support better telephone service for Dog Island.

The Public Service Commission Staff members have been very thorough in their research and field studies of our present telephone system.

We have also cooperated with the St Joseph Telephone Company, with Linda Bordellon and the independent engineering studies done by the telephone company.

There is apparently now no disagreement that the signal and service is substandard and unacceptable.

Originally, we were committed to the idea of buried marine fiberoptic service to Dog Island. We have read the phone company's recommendations as well as the recommendations of the Public Service Commission Staff Engineers and analyst. We the vast majority of telephone customers on Dog Island agree with the compromise from cellular service to Digital Loop Service with buried copper wire along the Florida Power Right of Way on the side of the roads and to each home.

We understand that it would be a greater than 50% savings in cost to the St Joseph Telephone Company and the service to us would be identical in quality and privacy and efficacy as if we were in Carrabelle.

We would like to therefore present our support to the St Joseph Telephone Company's plan that has been endorsed by the Public Service Commission Staff members.

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We are indeed grateful to the Public Service Commission Staff and to the Telephone Company in coming up with a suitable and workable plan. I believe that you will remember from our last hearing that we were concerned with the computer compatibility to transmit ECG data for the First Responders to hospital emergency rooms; we were also concerned with 24 hour ability to reach 911. I believe that if this plan is implemented we will indeed be rid of all the heartache of the cellular signal with it's shielded and intermittent signal availability.

We are grateful to everyone involved in this work for the greater benefits to the public consumer whether they be healthy or elderly or sick.

I thank you very much for your positive efforts on our behalf.

Cordially,



Ivan A. Backerman, M.D.

IAB/eeb