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October 26, 2012

By Hand Delivery and Electronic Mail

Debra A. Howland
Executive Director
New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301-2429



Re: DT 12-246 Electric and Telephone Utilities - Review of Utility Pole Access Issues

Dear Ms. Howland:

On behalf of Granite State Electric Company d/b/a Liberty Utilities (“Liberty” or the “Company”), I am submitting comments regarding the Staff’s recommendation filed on October 10, 2012, in the above-captioned docket.

To the extent that the Commission were to initiate a rulemaking on pole attachments regarding third party make-ready work, Liberty would support the requirement that any such work be coordinated through the National Joint Utilities Notification System (NJUNS). Liberty uses NJUNS to coordinate this work and has found that it is an efficient way to manage the third party attachment process. Liberty’s process for third party attachment applications follows the FCC guidelines and is broken into three areas, Receipt of Application, Survey, and Make Ready Work. To the extent the Commission promulgates any rules governing the attachment process, Liberty requests that the Commission adopt a process which tracks the FCC guidelines given that this process is already widely in use and is effective.

Finally, Staff’s October 10th letter recommended that “...the rulemaking address the general practice of requiring new attachments to be located 40 inches below the neutral and whether a more efficient method can be established.” Liberty strongly recommends that any such rulemaking require that any new attachments be located 40 inches below the neutral in order to protect the safety of communication workers from the hazards of electric lines. The National Electric Safety Code (NESC), which governs the construction clearances for overhead and underground supply and communications lines and associated equipment, requires this 40 inch distance. Specifically, Part 2 of the Safety Rules for the Installation and Maintenance of Overhead Electric Supply, Section 235C4 (“Communication Worker Safety Zone and Communication Lines”) states that “The clearances specified in Rules 235C (refer to table 235-5 1.a 1.00 meter which converts to 39 3/8” or 40”) and 238 create a communication worker safety

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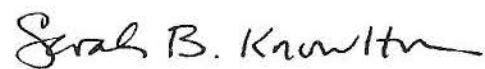
October 26, 2012

Page Two

zone between the facilities located in the supply space and facilities located in the communication space, both at the structure and in the span between structures.” If this 40 inch space is reduced, Liberty is concerned that communication workers, who are not trained to work in close proximity to electric lines, will be in danger of serious injury or death when working on the Company’s pole. This is a very serious safety consideration which the Commission should consider if it undertakes the proposed rulemaking.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah B. Knowlton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Sarah B. Knowlton

cc: Service list