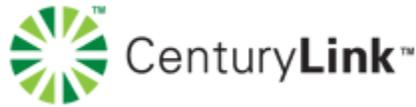


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Press Release

CenturyLink and Qwest Receive Merger Approval in Nine States and the District of Columbia

MONROE, La. and DENVER, Sept 22, 2010 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ --

CenturyLink, Inc. (NYSE: CTL) and Qwest Communications International Inc. (NYSE: Q) announced that they have received approval of their pending merger from nine of the states requiring it. The Public Service Commission for the District of Columbia determined no action is necessary. The companies also received antitrust clearance from the Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission when the applicable waiting period under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Act was terminated early July 15, 2010.

Last week, the companies received approvals from the Louisiana and Mississippi Public Service Commissions. Additionally, the California Public Utilities Corporation, the Georgia Public Service Commission, the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission, the Maryland Public Service Commission, the Ohio Public Utilities Commission, the West Virginia Public Service Commission and the New York Public Service Commission have already cleared the companies' merger applications without conditions.

The companies must receive approval from 12 additional states, as well as the Federal Communications Commission. Shareholders from each company approved proposals related to the transaction in August. The companies still expect to complete the transaction during the first half of 2011.

"Obtaining these state approvals not only signifies that we have met the requirements in these states, it also demonstrates that the commissions recognize this transaction is very much in the public interest. We are particularly pleased to have received approval without conditions in Louisiana, where we operate our headquarters. We appreciate the confidence the Louisiana Public Service Commission has shown in us through their review process and their recognition of the high-quality of the communications services we provide," said Glen F. Post, III, chief executive officer and president of CenturyLink. "We believe the benefits of combining the two companies will result in a national, industry-leading communications company capable of delivering advanced services to consumers and businesses of all sizes. We expect to provide an attractive portfolio of broadband products and services including high-speed Internet, video entertainment, data hosting and managed services."

"As a national player with substantially increased scale and scope, the combined company will create an even more compelling choice for customers," said Edward A. Mueller, Qwest's chairman and chief executive officer. "Together, we will be a stronger competitor with greater financial flexibility and new opportunities to perfect the customer experience. We will continue to work closely with CenturyLink and the remaining regulatory agencies to bring the transaction to a timely close."

The combined company will be headquartered in Monroe, La., and will maintain a key operational presence in Denver. Together, the companies employ approximately 49,000 people nationwide.

As of June 30, 2010, CenturyLink served approximately 2.3 million broadband customers, 6.8 million access lines and 594,000 video subscribers. As of June 30, 2010, Qwest served approximately 2.9 million broadband customers, 9.4 million access lines, 950,000 video subscribers and more than 980,000 wireless customers. The combination creates a robust, national 180,000 route mile fiber network, which enables delivery of a diverse mix of offerings and increased scale.

For more information about the merger, visit centurylinkqwestmerger.com.

About CenturyLink

CenturyLink is a leading provider of high-quality broadband, entertainment and voice services over its advanced communications networks to consumers and businesses in 33 states. CenturyLink, headquartered in Monroe, La., is an S&P 500 company and is included among the Fortune 500 list of America's largest corporations. For more information on CenturyLink, visit www.centurylink.com.

About Qwest

Customers coast to coast turn to Qwest's industry-leading national fiber-optic network and world-class customer service to meet their communications and entertainment needs. For residential customers, Qwest offers a new generation of [fiber-optic-fast Internet](#) service, [high-speed internet](#) solutions, as well as [home phone](#), [Verizon Wireless](#), and [DIRECTV\(R\)](#) services. Fortune 500 companies and other [large businesses](#) and [wholesale customers](#), as well as [small businesses](#) and

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governmental agencies, choose Qwest to deliver a full suite of network, data and voice services. Additionally, Qwest participates in **Networkx**, the largest communications services contract in the world and is recognized as a **leader** in the network services market by leading technology industry analyst firms.

Forward Looking Statements

Certain non-historical statements made in this release and future oral or written statements or press releases by us or our management are intended to be forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements are based on current expectations only, and are subject to a number of risks, uncertainties and assumptions, many of which are beyond our control. Actual events and results may differ materially from those anticipated, estimated or projected if one or more of these risks or uncertainties materialize, or if underlying assumptions prove incorrect. Factors that could affect actual results include but are not limited to: the timing, success and overall effects of competition from a wide variety of competitive providers; the risks inherent in rapid technological change; the effects of ongoing changes in the regulation of the communications industry (including those arising out of the Federal Communication Commission's National Broadband Plan released in the first quarter of 2010); our ability to effectively adjust to changes in the communications industry; changes in our allocation of the Embarq purchase price after the date hereof; our ability to successfully integrate Embarq into our operations, including the possibility that the anticipated benefits from the Embarq merger cannot be fully realized in a timely manner or at all, or that integrating Embarq's operations into ours will be more difficult, disruptive or costly than anticipated; our ability to successfully complete our pending acquisition of Qwest, including timely receiving all shareholder and regulatory approvals and realizing the anticipated benefits of the transaction; our ability to effectively manage our expansion opportunities, including retaining and hiring key personnel; possible changes in the demand for, or pricing of, our products and services; our ability to successfully introduce new product or service offerings on a timely and cost-effective basis; our continued access to credit markets on favorable terms; our ability to collect our receivables from financially troubled communications companies; our ability to pay a \$2.90 per common share dividend annually, which may be affected by changes in our cash requirements, capital spending plans, cash flows or financial position; unanticipated increases in our capital expenditures; our ability to successfully negotiate collective bargaining agreements on reasonable terms without work stoppages; the effects of adverse weather; other risks referenced from time to time in this report or other of our filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC"); and the effects of more general factors such as changes in interest rates, in tax rates, in accounting policies or practices, in operating, medical, pension or administrative costs, in general market, labor or economic conditions, or in legislation, regulation or public policy. These and other uncertainties related to our business and our July 2009 acquisition of Embarq are described in greater detail in Item 1A to our Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2009, as updated and supplemented by our subsequent SEC reports. You should be aware that new factors may emerge from time to time and it is not possible for us to identify all such factors nor can we predict the impact of each such factor on the business or the extent to which any one or more factors may cause actual results to differ from those reflected in any forward-looking statements. You are further cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date of this release. We undertake no obligation to update any of our forward-looking statements for any reason.

SOURCE CenturyLink

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