

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK**

In re:	)	Chapter 11
WINDSTREAM HOLDINGS, INC., <i>et al.</i> , <sup>1</sup>	)	Case No. 19-22312 (RDD)
Debtors.	)	(Jointly Administered)

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**INTERIM ORDER AUTHORIZING THE  
PAYMENT OF CERTAIN PREPETITION TAXES AND FEES**

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Upon the motion (the “Motion”)<sup>2</sup> of the above-captioned debtors and debtors in possession (collectively, the “Debtors”) for entry of an interim order (this “Interim Order”) (a) authorizing the Debtors, in their sole discretion, to remit and pay certain accrued and outstanding Taxes and Fees and (b) scheduling a final hearing to consider approval of the Motion on a final basis, all as more fully set forth in the Motion; and upon the First Day Declaration; and this Court having jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 157(a)-(b) and 1334(b) and the *Amended Standing Order of Reference from the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York*, dated February 1, 2012; and this Court having found that venue of the Motion in this district is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1408 and 1409 and that this is a core proceeding pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 157(b) that this Court may decide by a final order consistent with Article III of the United States Constitution; and this Court having found that the Debtors’ notice of the interim relief sought in the Motion and opportunity for a hearing on such request were appropriate under the

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<sup>1</sup> The last four digits of Debtor Windstream Holdings, Inc.’s tax identification number are 7717. Due to the large number of debtor entities in these chapter 11 cases, for which the Debtors have requested joint administration, a complete list of the debtor entities and the last four digits of their federal tax identification numbers is not provided herein. A complete list of such information may be obtained on the website of the Debtors’ proposed claims and noticing agent at <http://www.kcellc.net/windstream>. The location of the Debtors’ service address for purposes of these chapter 11 cases is: 4001 North Rodney Parham Road, Little Rock, Arkansas 72212.

<sup>2</sup> Capitalized terms used but not otherwise defined herein have the meanings ascribed to them in the Motion.



circumstances and that no other notice need be provided; and upon the record of the interim hearing held by the Court on the Motion on February 26, 2019; and there being no objection to the relief granted herein; and, after due deliberation, this Court having determined that the legal and factual bases set forth in the Motion and at the Hearing establish good and sufficient cause for the relief granted herein, in that such relief is necessary to avoid immediate and irreparable harm to the Debtors and their estates and that such relief provides a material net benefit to the Debtors and their estates after taking into account the Bankruptcy Code's priority scheme and is in the best interests of the Debtors and their estates; now, therefore, it is HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. The Motion is granted on an interim basis as set forth herein.
2. The final hearing (the "Final Hearing") on the Motion shall be held on April 16, 2019, at 10:00 a.m., prevailing Eastern Time. Any objections or responses to entry of a final order on the Motion shall be filed on or before 4:00 p.m., prevailing Eastern Time, on April 9, 2019, and shall be served on: (a) the Debtors, Windstream Holdings, Inc., 4001 North Rodney Parham Road, Little Rock, Arkansas 72212, Attn.: Kristi M. Moody; (b) proposed counsel to the Debtors, Kirkland & Ellis LLP, 601 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10022, Attn.: Stephen E. Hessler, P.C., and Kirkland & Ellis LLP, 300 North LaSalle Street, Chicago, Illinois 60654, Attn.: Ross M. Kwasteniet, P.C., Brad Weiland, and John R. Luze; (c) counsel to any statutory committee appointed in these cases; and (d) the Office of The United States Trustee, U.S. Federal Office Building, 201 Varick Street, Suite 1006, New York, New York 10014, Attn.: Paul K. Schwartzberg and Serene Nakano and otherwise as provided in the Court's order approving notice and case management procedures, including the provision of a copy of the pleading to the Court's chambers. In the event no objections to entry of a final order on the Motion are timely received, this Court may enter such final order without need for the Final Hearing.

3. The Debtors are authorized to pay or remit, in their sole discretion, the Taxes and Fees accrued prior to the Petition Date that will become payable during the pendency of these chapter 11 cases, on an interim basis, at such time when the Taxes and Fees are payable in the ordinary course of business.

4. Nothing in this Interim Order authorizes the Debtors to accelerate any payments not otherwise due prior to the date of the Final Hearing.

5. Notwithstanding the relief granted in this Interim Order and any actions taken pursuant to such relief, nothing in this Interim Order shall be deemed: (a) an admission as to the validity of any particular claim against the Debtors; (b) a waiver of the Debtors' rights to dispute any particular claim on any grounds; (c) a promise or requirement to pay any particular claim; (d) an implication or admission that any particular claim is of a type specified or defined in this Interim Order or the Motion; (e) a request or authorization to assume any agreement, contract, or lease pursuant to section 365 of the Bankruptcy Code; (f) a waiver or limitation of the Debtors' rights under the Bankruptcy Code or any other applicable law; or (g) a concession by the Debtors that any liens (contractual, common law, statutory, or otherwise) satisfied pursuant to the Motion are valid, and the Debtors expressly reserve their rights to contest the extent, validity, or perfection or seek avoidance of all such liens. Any payment made pursuant to this Order is not intended and should not be construed as an admission as to the validity of any particular claim or a waiver of the Debtors' rights to subsequently dispute such claim.

6. The banks and financial institutions on which checks were drawn or electronic payment requests made in payment of the prepetition obligations approved herein are authorized and directed to receive, process, honor, and pay all such checks and electronic payment requests when presented for payment, and all such banks and financial institutions are authorized to rely on

the Debtors' designation of any particular check or electronic payment request as approved by this Interim Order without any duty to inquire otherwise and without liability for following the Debtors' instructions.

7. The Debtors are authorized to issue postpetition checks, or to effect postpetition fund transfer requests, in replacement of any checks or fund transfer requests that are dishonored as a consequence of these chapter 11 cases with respect to prepetition amounts owed in connection with any Taxes and Fees.

8. Notwithstanding anything in the Motion or this Interim Order to the contrary, any payment made or action taken by any of the Debtors pursuant to the authority granted herein, as well as the exercise of any and all other rights and authorizations granted or approved hereunder, shall be subject in all respects to, as applicable: (i) the orders approving the Debtors' use of cash collateral and/or post-petition debtor-in-possession financing facilities (collectively, the "DIP Orders"), (ii) the other documentation governing the Debtors' use of cash collateral and postpetition financing facilities, and (iii) the Budget (as defined in the DIP Orders).

9. To the extent there is any inconsistency between the terms of any of the DIP Orders and this Interim Order, the terms of the DIP Order (or DIP Orders, as applicable) shall control.

10. The contents of the Motion satisfy the requirements of Bankruptcy Rule 6003(b).

11. Notice of the Motion as provided therein shall be deemed good and sufficient notice of such Motion and the requirements of Bankruptcy Rule 6004(a) and the Local Rules are satisfied by such notice.

12. Notwithstanding Bankruptcy Rule 6004(h), the terms and conditions of this Interim Order are immediately effective and enforceable upon its entry.

13. The Debtors are authorized to take all actions necessary to effectuate the relief

granted in this Interim Order in accordance with the Motion.

14. This Court retains exclusive jurisdiction with respect to all matters arising from or related to the implementation, interpretation, and enforcement of this Interim Order.

Dated: White Plains, New York  
February 28, 2019

/s/Robert D. Drain

THE HONORABLE ROBERT D. DRAIN  
UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY JUDGE