

STATE OF FLORIDA

Commissioners:
E. LEON JACOBS, JR., CHAIRMAN
J. TERRY DEASON
LILA A. JABER
BRAULIO L. BAEZ
MICHAEL A. PALECKI



DIVISION OF POLICY ANALYSIS &
INTERGOVERNMENTAL LIAISON
CHARLES H. HILL
DIRECTOR
(850) 413-6800

Public Service Commission

January 19, 2001

VIA AIRBORNE EXPRESS

Ms. Magalie Roman Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, SW - TW-A325
Washington, DC 20554

Re: CC Docket No. 99-217, Promotion of Competitive Networks in Local Telecommunications Markets;
Wireless Communications Association International, Inc. Petition for Rulemaking to Amend Section 1.4000 of the Commission's Rules to Preempt Restrictions on Subscriber Premises Reception or Transmission Antennas Designed to Provide Fixed Wireless Services;
CC Docket No. 96-98, Implementation of the Local Competition Provisions in the Telecommunications Act of 1996; and
CC Docket No. 88-57, Review of Sections 68.104, and 68.213 of the Commission's Rules Concerning Connection of Simple Inside Wiring to the Telephone Network

Dear Ms. Salas:

Enclosed are an original and five copies of Comments of the Florida Public Service Commission in CC Docket No. 99-217, along with five copies of a two-volume report entitled *Access by Telecommunications Companies to Customers in Multitenant Environments*, published by the Florida Public Service Commission in February 1999.

Please date stamp and return one copy of the Comments in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely,

Cynthia B. Miller, Esquire
Bureau of Intergovernmental Liaison

CBM:tf
Enclosures

cc: Brad Ramsay, National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners
International Transcription Services, Inc.

**BEFORE THE
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of:)	
)	
Promotion of Competitive Networks in Local Telecommunications Markets)	WT Docket No. 99-217
)	
Wireless Communications Association International, Inc. Petition for Rulemaking to Amend Section 1.4000 of the Commission's Rules to Preempt Restrictions on Subscriber Premises Reception or Transmission Antennas Designed to Provide Fixed Wireless Services)	
)	
Implementation of the Local Competition Provisions in the Telecommunications Act of 1996)	CC Docket No. 96-98
)	
Review of Sections 68.104, and 68.213 of the Commission's Rules Concerning Connection of Simple Inside Wiring to the Telephone Network)	CC Docket No. 88-57
)	
_____)	

**COMMENTS OF THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
IN RESPONSE TO FURTHER NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING**

The Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC) hereby respectfully submits its comments to the Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the CC Dockets No. 99-217. The FPSC commends the efforts to ensure the ability of competing telecommunications providers to serve customers in multiple tenant environments (MTEs).

Introduction and Summary

While we comment specifically on the question of extending the prohibition on exclusive access contracts to residential MTEs, we also raise our concerns regarding the FCC's change in procedures for moving the demarcation point to the minimum point of entry (MPOE). In addition, these comments address the need for a forum to resolve disputes. The FPSC recognizes that

competitors may face difficulties in serving tenants of MTEs and has already explored these issues in the February 1999 Florida *Report on Access by Telecommunications Companies to Customers in Multitenant Environments* (Report). We are enclosing our report in order to share our research and the issues we addressed.

Residential Exclusive Contracts

In its order, the FCC prohibited exclusive access contracts between building owners or managers of commercial MTEs and now seeks comment on whether to extend such prohibition to residential MTEs. The FPSC believes the prohibition on exclusive access contracts is appropriate and should be extended to residential MTEs. In our report, we determined that “[e]xclusionary contracts bar access to tenants by any competitors. Exclusionary contracts are inherently anticompetitive and should, therefore, be prohibited as being against public policy.” (Report at p. 40)

Preferential Marketing Agreements and Other Preferential Arrangements

The FCC also seeks comment on whether it “should prohibit carriers from entering into contracts that grant them preferences other than exclusive access, such as exclusive marketing or landlord bonuses to tenants that use their services, in some or all situations.” The FPSC determined in its Report that, although such agreements were not as “blatantly anticompetitive” as exclusionary contracts, they impede competition because a landlord could encourage tenants to be served by one telecommunications company over others. Although the FPSC did not recommend prohibiting such arrangements at the time of the report, the report did state that landlords should disclose the existence of such marketing agreements to potential tenants. (Report at p. 40)

Filing of Complaints

In ¶158, the FCC seeks comment on how any nondiscriminatory access rule should be enforced. The FCC asks whether aggrieved parties should invoke the FCC's general procedures for complaints against common carriers. Thus the FCC is considering handling complaints filed by landlords, carriers, and customers in these matters.

It is crucial that a proper forum be established for settling disputes and proper claims regarding access to tenants in multitenant environments by telecommunications companies. A specific forum does need to be identified. Currently, there are overlapping jurisdictions with Federal regulatory agencies, state regulatory agencies, and the Courts. In our 1999 Report at pages 49-50, we recommended that there be a threshold for bringing disputes and certain standards for review.

Some of the suggestions were:

- ! Tenants, landlords, and telecommunications providers should make every reasonable effort to negotiate access to a tenant requesting service.
- ! A landlord may impose conditions reasonably necessary for the safety, security, and aesthetics of the property.
- ! A landlord may not deny access to space or conduit, previously dedicated to public service, if that space or conduit is sufficient to accommodate the facilities needed for access.
- ! A landlord may deny access where the space or conduit required for installation is not sufficient to accommodate the request or where the installation would harm the aesthetics of the building.
- ! A landlord may not charge a fee solely for the privilege of providing telecommunications service in an MTE.

The FPSC is willing and is better positioned to handle some of the complaints in Florida, at least as to complaints filed against the carriers (i.e., customer complaints, carrier-to-carrier disputes).

¹ In responding to these complaints, the FPSC would apply its own rules.

Access to Wiring/Minimum Point of Entry

We need to make sure that we are able to pinpoint responsibility when there is a problem. We need to understand how this would affect our rules on the demarcation point and whether there is preemption. The FPSC assumes that the FCC has not preempted states' demarcation rules; therefore, Florida will maintain its current rules requiring the demarcation point at each customer's premises in multi-tenant dwellings. In the past, we have filed comments expressing concern that the customer may be harmed if the demarcation point is defined as the minimum point of entry (MPOE). For example, Florida requires local exchange companies (LECs) to complete primary telephone service installation in three working days to the demarcation point within customers' premises. By changing the demarcation point to the MPOE, LECs would be relieved of any responsibility or burden to ensure the customer has dial tone within the customer's premises. Under the MPOE scenario, the LEC has fulfilled its obligation once it has introduced service at the MPOE. The landlord or other responsible party may take several days or weeks to complete the connection from the MPOE to the customer's premises. While we have authority to require the carriers to meet

¹ In our 1999 Report, we noted that the FPSC "would not have authority over controversies pertaining to mandatory multitenant access without specific legislative authority." (Report at p. 56) Thus, while we could address customer complaints against carriers and carrier-to-carrier disputes in certain instances, the FPSC does not have express jurisdiction over landlords. It would be possible to make a requirement that if any carrier serves a customer in an MTE building, it must make any spare facilities available to its competitors. This might eliminate most of the complaints that would arise against the landlord. We note that the FCC looks to Section 201(b) for its authority in this area. That section authorizes the FCC to regulate all practices in connection with interstate communication service. The FCC cites *Cable & Wireless v. FCC*, 166 F3d 1224, 1230-32 (D.C. Cir. 1999) for its "undoubted power to regulate the contractual or other arrangement between common carriers and other entities, even those entities that are generally not subject to Commission regulation." (p. 18)

certain time frames, we do not have authority to mandate time frames for landlords to act. The FPSC believes that this is not in the public's interest.

If the FCC's purpose of moving the demarcation point to the MPOE is to foster competition, we believe there may be a better approach. Currently, in Florida, a competitive local exchange company (CLEC) must enter into an interconnection agreement with the incumbent LECs to acquire dial tone, collocation, or unbundled network elements. The CLECs may obtain the entire local loop, connect at the MPOE and lease the wire to the customer's premises from the entity that owns it, or acquire the loop all the way to the customer's premises. The wire from the MPOE to the customer's premises is considered network wire in Florida. Landlords, CLECs, or LECs are not precluded from owning the wire installed between the MPOE and demarcation point within the customer's premises. The local service provider and the owner of the wire between the MPOE and the demarcation point can be required to reach an agreement on the use of the wire. This approach would eliminate the landlord's concern of having to provide any additional conduit access for other companies to place their own wiring.

It appears that equal application of Florida's demarcation point rule to CLECs and LECs might ensure the FPSC's authority to best serve the interests of the public. Responsibility for delivery of dial tone to the customer, at his premises in a multi-tenant environment would fully rest with the provider offering the service. This is an approach that Florida may consider in rulemaking. If the FCC also adopted this approach, it appears that the customers might reap the benefits of competition without the fear of not receiving the service purchased.

Conclusion

In its ongoing attempts to ensure the promotion of competition in MTEs, the FPSC urges the Commission to continue its efforts to ensure that customers in multi-tenant environments have the opportunity to receive the benefits of competition. As the FPSC stated in its Report:

A Multitenant environment (MTE) in which a landlord or building owner controls access to the telecommunications equipment area or other related facilities in a structure appears to be a situation where limitations to competition may exist. A tenant in an MTE should have reasonable access to any telecommunications company, and a telecommunications company should have reasonable access to a tenant. Equally important, it is unacceptable for an incumbent local exchange company (ILEC) to use its incumbent position to limit an alternative local exchange company's (ALEC) ability to market its services or install its equipment in an MTE, and landlords should not impede access to competitive telecommunications service. (Report at p. 1)

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia B. Miller, Esq.
Bureau of Intergovernmental Liaison

FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850
(850) 413-6082

DATED: January 19, 2001

Florida Public Service Commission
January 19, 2001
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Certificate of Service

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the foregoing Comments of the Florida Public Service Commission will be furnished, without the attachment, to the parties on the attached list.

Cynthia B. Miller, Esq.
Bureau of Intergovernmental Liaison

DATED: January 19, 2001.

The Honorable William E. Kennard, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW - 8th Floor
Room 8-B201H
Washington, DC 20554

The Honorable Harold Furchtgott-Roth
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, SW - 8th Floor
Room 8-A302C
Washington, DC 20554

The Honorable Gloria Tristani
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, SW - 8th Floor
Room 8-C302C
Washington, DC 20554

Jane E. Jackson, Chief
Competitive Pricing Division
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
T.W. A225
Washington, DC 20554

Jonathan Askin, Esquire
The Association for Local Telecom.Services
888 17th Street, NW - Suite 900
Washington, DC 20006

Brad E. Mutschelknaus
Robert J. Aamothe
Kelly Drye & Warren, LLP
1200 19th Street, NW - Fifth Floor
Washington, DC 20036

David W. Carpenter
David L. Lawson
Sidley & Austin
1722 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Cherie R. Kiser, Michael H. Pryor
Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky And Popeo, PC
701 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW - Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004-2608

The Honorable Susan Ness
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th, SW - 8th Floor
Room 8-B115H
Washington, DC 20554

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, SW - 8th Floor
Room 8-A204C
Washington, DC 20554

International Transcription Services, Inc.
1231 20th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036

Ms. Dorothy Attwood, Chief
Common Carrier Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW, Room F-C450
Washington, DC 20554

Richard S. Whitt
Cristin L. Flynn
WorldCom, Inc.
1801 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Mr. Mark C. Roseblum
Stephen C. Gravito
AT&T Room 1131M1
295 North Maple Avenue
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Lee Schroeder
Cablevision Lightpath, Inc.
1111 Stewart Avenue
Bethpage, NY 11714-3581

Centennial Communications Corp.
j Christopher W. Savage and Brenda J. Boykin
Cole, Raywid & Braverman, LLP
1919 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW #200
Washington, DC 20006-3458

M. Robert Sutherland, Richard M. Sbaratta
BellSouth Corporation
1155 Peachtree Street, NE
Suite 1800
Atlanta, GA 30309

Lionel Wilson
Ellen S. Levine
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Albert H. Kramer
Jacob Farber
Dickstein Shapiro Morin & Oshinsky, LLP
2101 L. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

Paul G. Aforso, Esq. General Counsel
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Telecom. & Energy
One South Station
Boston, MA 02110

Dana K. Joyce
Marc D. Poston
Missouri Public Service Commission
P. O. Box 360
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Lawrence G. Malone
General Counsel
NYS Department of Public Service
Three Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12223

Robert B. McKenna
Jeffrey A. Brueggeman
Qwest Communications
1020 19th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036

Stephen J. Davis
Office of Policy Development
Public Utility Commission of Texas
P. O. Box 13326
Austin, TX 78711

John Cleven Tooker, President
Western Telephone Integrated
Communications, Inc.
303 East Jackson Street
Medford, OR 97501

Helen Mickiewicz, Esq.
Peter Arth, Jr.
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Richard M. Rindler, Michael W. Fleming
Patrick Donovan, Robin Redfield
Swindler Berlin Shereff-Friedman, LLP
3000 K Street, NW - Suite 300
Washington, DC 20007-5116

George N. Barclay
Michael J. Ettner
General Services Administration
1800 F Street, NW - Room 4002
Washington, DC 20405

Susan Grant
National Consumers League
1701 K Street, NW - Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20006

Richard A. Askoff
National Exchange Carrier Association
80 South Jefferson Road
Whippany, NJ 07981

Renee R. Crittendon
Prism Communications Service, Inc.
1667 K Street NW - Suite 200
Washington, DC 20006

Gary L. Phillips
Roger K. Toppins
SBC Communications, Inc.
1401 Eye Street, NW - Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005

John M. Goodman
Verizon Telephone Companies
1300 1 Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Philip F. McClelland, Joel H. Cheskis,
Irwin A. Popowsky
Office of Consumer Advocate
555 Walnut Street, 5th Floor - Forum Place
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1923

William T. Lake, Lynn R. Charytan
Jonathan J. Frankel
Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering
2445 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

Leon M. Kestenbaum
Jay Keithley
Sprint Corporation
401 9th Street, NW - Suite 400
Washington, DC 20004

Mark D. Schneider
Darryl Bradford
Jenner & Block
601 13th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Aliceann Wohlbruck
NADO
444 North Capitol Street, NW - Suite 630
Washington, DC 20001

Harry Alford, President
National Black Chamber of Commerce
1350 Connecticut Avenue, NW - Suite 825
Washington, DC 200036

George Herrea, President & CEO
U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
1019 19th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20003

Stan Silverman, Director
Technology Based Learning Systems
New York Institute of Technology
P. O. Box 9029
Central Islip, NY 11722

Charles C. Hunter
Catherine M. Hannan
Hunter Communications Law Group
1620 I Street, NW - Suite 701
Washington, DC 20006

Keith Townsend
United States Telecom Association
1401 H Street, NW
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005

David Cosson
John Kuyendall
Kraskin, Lesse & Cosson, LLP
2120 L. Street, NW - Suite 520
Washington, DC 20037

Brian Conboy, Thomas Jones
Wilkie Farr & Gallagher
Three Lafayette Centre
1155 21st Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036

Cleo Manuel, Executive Director
Keep America Connected
P.O. Box 27911
Washington, DC 20005

Nancy Bloch
National Association of the Deaf
814 Thayer Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Daniel McVeigh, President
Ocean of Know
178 Dover Furwave Road
Dover Plains, NY 12522

Pace A. Duckenfield, Esquire
Alliance for Public Technology
919 18th Street, NW - Suite 900
Washington, DC 20006

Claude L. Stout, Executive Director
Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc.
8630 Fenton Street, Suite 604
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3803

James Connelly
Department of Telecommunications and Energy
One South Station
Boston, MA 02110

John O. Postl, Esq.
William J. Rooney, Jr., Esq
Global NAPs, Inc.
10 Merrymount Road
Quincy, MA 02169

Robert L. Dewees, Jr., Esq.
Nixon Peabody LLP
101 Federal Street
Boston, MA 02110-1832

Linda L. Oliver, Jennifer A. Purvis,
Yaron Dori, Margaret E. Kane
Hogan & Hartson, LLP
555 13th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Marc D. Poston, Senior Counsel
Missouri Public Service Commission
PO Box 360
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Lynn Lane Williams, Assistant General Counsel
Oklahoma Corporation Commission
PO Box 52000-2000
Oklahoma City, OK 73152-2000

Mary Newmeyer
Utility Rate Supervisor
Alabama Public Service Commission
Post Office Box 991
Montgomery, AL 36101-0991

Gerard Lavery Lederer
Building Owners and Managers Association Intl.
1201 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005

Clarine Nardi Riddle
General Counsel
National Multi Housing Council
1850 M Street, N.W., Suite 540
Washington, DC 20036

Bruce Lundegren
National Association of Home Builders
1201 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Tony Edwards, General Counsel
National Association of Real Estate Investment
Trusts
1875 Eye Street, NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20006

Roger Platt, National Policy Counsel
Real Estate Roundtable
1420 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005