



3100 Cumberland Circle Atlanta, GA 30339

January 20, 1998

VIA FED EX

Ms. Blanca S. Bayó
Director, Records and Reporting
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

In Re: Docket No.

Dear Ms. Bayó:

WAS

OTH _____

Enclosed for filing are sixteen (16) <u>refermatted</u> copies of the Rebuttal Testimony of Sandee Buysee-Baker on behalf of Sprint Communications Company Limited Partnership which was filed on January 15, 1998. The testimony has not been modified; it has been reformatted to conform with the procedural order in this docket.

We are enclosing an extra copy of this transmittal letter. We ask that you please mark it to indicate that the reformatted copies were filed and return it to me in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope. Copies have been served to the parties shown on the attached certificate of service.

ACK		
AFA		assistance with this matter. We apologize for any inconvenience this
APO ALLUTEN	have caused.	
CAF 3		Sinceppy,
CMU _2		
CTR		
EAG		Monica M. Barone
LEG		Attorney
که مند رسید	.	
	B:vw	
C.10	Everett Boyd	
l'	Parties of Records	
SEC		

FPSC-RECORDS/REPORTING



ORIGINAL

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

DOCKET NUMBER 970002-TI

REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF SANDEE BUYSSE-BAKER
ON BEHALF OF
SPRINT COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY LIMITED PARTNERSHIP

1	Q. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND BUSINESS ADDRESS.
2	
3	A. My same is Sendee Buyess-Baker and my business address is 10951 Lakeview
4	Drive, Leneus, Kanses 66219.
5	
6	Q. ARE YOU THE SAME SANDEE BUYSSE-BAKER THAT PRE-FILED DIRECT
7	TESTIMONY IN THIS DOCKET ON BEHALF OF SPRINT COMMUNICATIONS
8	COMPANY LIMITED PARTNERSHIP ("SPRINT")?
9	
10	A. Yes, I am.
11	
12	WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR REBUTTAL TESTIM: ONY?
13	
14	A. The purpose of my rebuttal testimony is to respond to the pre-filed Direct Testimony
15	of R. Earl Poucher, Office of the Attorney General, and Alan Taylor of the Commission
16	Staff.
17	
18	DO YOU AGREE THAT THE SLAMMING PROBLEM CAN BE CONTROLLED
19	WITH THE ADDITIONAL RULE CHANGES BEING PROPOSED BY WITNESS
0	POUCHER?
21	
22	A. No, not entirely. Sprint agrees that slamming is a significant industry problem.
23	Slamming is clearly a problem for consumers and telecommunications providers alike.
24	Long distance providers, specifically Sprint, have found that slamming complaints are
25	costly to seed us and an inefficient use of our employee's time. Sprint has incurred

- 1 significant financial loss in its efforts to make the customer whole. Sprint reimburses the
- 2 customer for all PIC change fees and adjusts the billing to reflect the rate of the previous
- 3 carrier. It is Sprint's objective to avoid slamming complaints.
- 4 While it is true that some of the recommendations proposed by Mr. Poucher may have
- 5 merit, others will be ineffective in reducing the problem of slamming.

6

- 7 WHAT ARE YOUR COMMENTS CONCERNING MR. POUCHER'S PROPOSAL
- 8 (Poucher Direct, Page 4, lines 9-12) THAT THE PSC REQUIRE A MONTHLY
- 9 REPORT OF SLAMMING COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY LECs, ALECS and IXCs?

10

- 11 A. Sprint would support this recommendation if a neutral third party were appointed to
- 12 perform all administrative activities as well as produce the report. This recommendation
- 13 is consistent with the proposal Sprint made to the FCC for consideration in its upcoming
- 14 Rulemaking on slausning. Sprint believes that ILECs should not be given the
- 15 responsibility to produce this report.
- 16 Additionally, Sprint believes that such a report would provide beneficial information to
- 17 the entire industry, and allow the Commission to focus on those carriers that intentionally
- 18 evade the Commission's Rules. These carriers have no real investment in the integrity of
- 19 the marketplace. Sprint does consider slamming to be a poor business practice since it
- 20 makes it harder for IXCs to compete because it quickly destroys valued customer
- 21 goodwill.
- 22 Sprint has taken decisive action to lessen the "personal trauma" for those customers who
- 23 claim to have been slammed. Our "No Fault" Policy allows any consumer claiming to
- 24 have been slammed to receive full reimbursement for all PIC change fees. In addition
- 25 Sprint will credit the consumer the difference, if any, in the billed rates from those rates

1	that would have applied with the original long distance provider.	
2		
3	DOES SPRINT HAVE A SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING THE	
4	MONTHLY REPORT?	
5		
6	A. Yes. Sprint recommends that the administrative responsibility for producing this	
7	monthly report be assigned to and administered by a neutral third party. Allowing the	
8	LECs to perform this function puts them in the unique position of having authority and	
9	control over the DKCs that have become their competition. A neutral third-party	
10	administrator would eliminate the ability of the ILEC to gain market advantage by	
11	damaging the reputation of competitive IXCs. A neutral third-party administrator would	
12	ensure that all carriers are judged by the same standards.	
13		
14	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS CONCERNING THE TEN ADDITIONAL	
15	CHANGES TO THE PROPOSED RULE AS SUGGESTED BY MR. POUCHER?	
16		
17	A.Yes, I do.	
18	Exc.	
19	WOULD YOU PLEASE COMMENT ON MR. POUCHER'S SUGGESTED CHANGE	
20	NUMBER 1.	
21		
27	A. Yes. in those cases where the Staff of the Commission concludes that the company or	
23	its agent has willfully engaged in fraudulent switching of a customer's choice of carriers,	
24	Mr. Poucher's suggested change number 1 would require the Commission Staff to initiate	
25	a separate docket and present each case separately to the Commission for appropriate	

1	disposition. Sprint supports any initiative that identifies legitimate slamming and
2	cramming cases. Accordingly, Sprint conours in and supports Mr. Poucher's
3	recommendation that the Staff of the PSC be required to initiate a separate docket and
4	present each case separately to the Commission when a company or its agent has willfully
5	engaged in a freedulent PIC change. Absent mitigating circumstances, Sprint also
6	supports imposing the maximum fine allowable (\$25,000) when any company engages in
7	fraudulent switching of consumers. Moreover, Sprint believes that the only way to deter
8	slamming is for the Commission, to the extent of its authority, to impose punitive
9	senctions. Sprint fully supports "slamming the slammers."
10	While Sprint supports the obligation of the PSC Staff to investigate customer complaints
11	concerning elementing, it is Sprint's desire that Staff understands that there are a number
12	of situations that contribute to the slamming problem, ranging - perhaps along a
13	continuum -from imposent and inadvertent mistakes by IXCs, ILECs and ALECs in the
14	order entry process to intentional fraud practiced by certain carriers or their marketing
15	agents that use deceptive practices to convert consumers to their service. The real reason
16	for an alleged slam may range from an innocent case of buyer's remorse to an attempt by
17	some subscribers to fraudulently obtain a refund of any carrier change fee incurred in
18	switching to another carrier and perhaps even to obtain free toll service from the allegedly
19	unauthorized carrier.
20	Sprint would also support any and all efforts on the part of the Commission to conduct an
21	investigation to obtain an understanding as to why a slam occurs. Once this root cause
22	analysis has been evaluated, the Commission should use this information in developing
23	its new Rules and imposing penalties for slamming offenses.
24	

25 Q. PLEASE COMMENT ON MR. POUCHER'S SUGGESTED CHANGE NUMBER

1 2.

2

3 A. Under Mr. Poucher's suggested change number 2, upon receiving a complaint from a 4 subscriber of an unauthorized change of carriers, whether the complaint is legitimate or 5 not, a LEC is required to: (a) immediately change the customer back to the customer's 6 original carrier; (b) offer to freeze the customer's choice of carriers; (c) charge back the 7 "slamming" IXC all existing billing up to 90 days or three billing periods, whichever is 8 longer, and credit the customers LEC account with the amount of the charge-back, and: 9 (d) block the customer's account from future billing from the carrier that caused the slam. 10 I will comment on each of these four proposed requirements. The proposals Mr. Poucher sets out in (a) and (b) simply would perpetuate the current industry problem of giving -11 12 LECs power and control over IXCs and permitting anticompetitive behavior. Sprint 13 would recommend that the Commission consider eliminating the LEC's "gatekeeper" 14 control of the carrier change process. Sprint recommends the adoption of a remedy that 15 would remove the LECs as "gatekeepers", rather than add additional requirements as 16 proposed by Mr. Poucher. Sprint further recommends that the Commission assign the 17 administration of the carrier change process to a neutral third party. Sprint recognizes 18 that a third party administrator may need to exercise some discretion in processing carrier 19 change orders received from carriers. It may, for example, want to check to ensure that 20 the carrier with a history of slamming and less than accurate verification procedures has 21 submitted properly verified PIC change orders. Vesting a neutral party with such 22 responsibility does not present the same risk of anti-competitive behavior that exists if the 23 ILECs were to perform the same function. A neutral third party administrator should 24 apply the same standards to all carriers. Third party administrators are not unusual in 25 the telecommunications industry. The telecommunications industry has already set a

1 precedent for using third-party administrators. For example, the industry has been using a 2 third party vendor to administer the national 800 database and will soon begin to use a 3 third nexty administrator for the National Consumer Telecommunications Database 4 Exchange. Mr. Poucher's proposal in (c) would, in effect, relieve customers who claim to have been 5 6 slammed of the obligation to pay any of the charges for the calls made during the time 7 that they were assigned to an allegedly unauthorized carrier. Sprint believes that such a 8 rule would only ensourage fraud and facilitate an increase in slamming complaints rather 9 than reduce them. When word is out that you can claim "slammed" and you are relieved 10 of the obligation to pay for the toll usage, fraud and slamming complaints will increase. 11 Sprint balleves that eavy rule absolving customers of liability in the event of an alleged 12 unauthorized PIC change only provides incentive for fraudulent slamming claims. There 13 are significant financial and public relations pressures to minimize unauthorized PIC 14 changes for those companies, such as Sprint, that have a long term vested interest in the 15 industry. The general public would be better served if the Commission would focus on those carriers that intentionally and habitually change a customer's service without any 16 17 authority or justification. In recommendation (d), Sprint fails to understand what benefit 18 would be realized by blocking the customer's account from future billing from the carrier 19 that caused the slam. Although Mr. Poucher may believe that this would relieve the customer of any personal trauma, it would in reality further encourage fraud. When 20 21 ertain consumers learn that they could use dial-around access to the network of the 22 slamming carrier and not be billed for their toll usage, fraud would escalate. 23 Mr. Poucher's proposal to require the LEC to disassociate the customer's regular 24 telephone billing of the charges from the offending carrier for both past and future billing 25 again places the LEC in a position of control over IXCs. As stated earlier in my

1	testimony, Sprint believes that the best method for resolving PIC change disputes is for
2	the Commission to appoint a neutral third party. This method removes all opportunity for
3	anti-competitive behavior. The ILEC will no longer be subject to the competitive
4	pressures to control the PIC change process to their advantage.
5	Sprint would also expect this third-party administrator to conduct a thorough
6	investigation to determine the morit of the complaint. This administrator should have ful
7	authority to report its findings to the Commission for assessing penalties as necessary. I
8	today's environment, there is already enormous financial pressure to eliminate slamming
9	complaints. Complaint resolution is inefficient and costly. Sprint LD corrects these
10	situations through its No Fault Policy. When Sprint receives a PIC dispute from the
11	customer's ILBC, we instruct the ILBC to return the customer to his previous carrier and
12	reimburges the customer for all carrier change charges incurred. Sprint not only
13	reimburges the customer for the PIC change fee, we also adjust the customer's billed toll
14	to reflect the rate of the previous carrier (if the previous carrier's rate is lower than
15	Sprint's rate). These carriers do not have much investment in the market nor are they
16	interested in doing business in the long term. They not only violate the Commission's
17	Rules, but they disparage reputable companies such as Sprint. As stated earlier in my
18	testimony, Sprint recommends that the PIC Freeze process be
19	administered by a neutral third party. Allowing the ILEC to impose a PIC Freeze will
20	only facilitate the abuse of responsibility currently practiced by some ILECs.
21	
22	PLEASE COMMENT ON MR. POUCHER'S SUGGESTED CHANGE NUMBER 3.
23	
24	A Mr. Poucher's third recommendation would require the Commission to adopt a rule

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25 providing that no carrier guilty of changing a customer's PIC without his or her

1	knowledge or authorization will be allowed to bill or collect for any of the services
2	provided to the customer during the period of unauthorized service up to 90 days or 3
3	billing periods, whichever is greater. This recommendation would not inflict any
4	financial hardship on those carriers that do not comply with the current Commission
5	Rules. Rather it would impose significant financial loss for those long distance providers
6	that are diligent in following the Commission's Rules. Although Mr. Poucher may
7	believe that this recommendation would benefit consumers and punish the offending
8	carriers, it will be the carriers that do not comply with the Commission's current Rules
9	that will benefit. These carriers are unlikely to follow any new anti-slamming regulation.
10	In addition, when certain consumers become aware that they will not be billed for their
11	toll usage if they claim to be a slamming victim, fraud will become uncontrollable. This
12	particular recommendation will not have any beneficial impact on slamming due $\boldsymbol{\omega}$ the
13	fraudulent practices it will create. Sprint believes that slamming complaints should be
14	investigated by a neutral third party. Upon completing this type of investigation if it is
15	determined that slamming did occur, the responsible company should receive the harshest
16	of penalties. The Commission should adopt a Rule that penaltizes companies that truly
17	slam customers. However, this determination should be reached after a thorough
18	investigation performed by a neutral third party.
19	
20	Q. PLEASE COMMENT ON MR. POUCHER'S SUGGESTION NUMBER 4.
21	
22	A. Mr. Poucher's suggestion number 4 would require that PIC changes may be
23	implemented only after a written notice has been sent from he IXC to the customer and
24	when one of the following conditions has been satisfied: (a) written confirmation of said
25	change of carrier has been received from the customer; or (b) an incoming call has been

1	received directly from the customer or a three way call has been received including the
2	customer and the IXC to the customer's serving LEC requesting the change; or (c) an
3	inbound or outboard telemerketing call from the IXC requesting the change has been
4	verified by a third party recording accepting the change. The recommendation requiring
5	written confirmation from the customer prior to the implementation of a PIC change will
6	unnecessarily delay fulfillment of the customer's reques, for long distance service. This
7	recommendation will not serve the public interest, but instead will harm both customers
8	and long distance companies.
9	In recommendation (b), requiring an incoming call directly from the customer to the LEC
10	in order to implement the PIC change will continue to authorize the LEC as the
11	"gatekeeper" of the PIC change process. As Sprint has already explained, it appears that
12	at least some ILECs are abusing their gatekeeper responsibilities by using PIC disputes
13	strategically to impede competition.
14	In (c), Mr. Poucher's recommendation to require a third-party recording would not
15	provide any benefit for the consumer. Obtaining a recording of the conversation between
16	the customer and an independent third-party verification vendor is an unnecessary
17	additional step that increases the cost of verification, and adds no additional security for
18	the customer. The "recording" offers no guarantee that the person authorizing the order is
19	the true customer with decision-making authority for the telephone service. Also, the
20	customer could easily deny that the recording is their voice. Additional verification costs
21	will undoubtedly be passed to the consumer in the form of higher rates. Unfortunately,
22	he carriers that are guilty of slamming are the same carriers that do not comply with the
23	current verification rules. It is difficult to expect then that they would pro-actively comply
24	with additional or more stringent rules. The FCC is proposing rule changes, and Sprint
25	believes that the best approach would be to enforce the existing rules and adopt new rules

1	only after the FCC has issued revisions. Carriers will be successful in complying with
2	regulations if both State and Federal Rules are consistent.
3	
4	PLEASE COMMENT ON MR. POUCHER'S SUGGESTION NUMBER 5.
5	
6	A. Mr. Poucher's suggestion number 5 would require that the Commission adopt a
7	specific rule that forbids the use of deceptive and unfair trade practices by
8	telecommunications companies regulated by the Commission. Sprint fully supports Mr.
9	Poucher in this recommendation. Carriers that employ sweepstakes and contests to entic
10	consumers to sign a disguised LOA and then do not bother to follow the Commission's
11	verification rules should be penalized.
12	
13	PLEASE COMMENT ON MR. POUCHER'S SUGGESTION NUMBER 6.
14	
15	A. Sprint supports suggestion number 6 to the extent that new applicants for certification
16	should be required to certify that the company intends to provide adequate facilities
17	including free inward toll calling for the company to receive and process customer
18	inquires. However, Sprint believes that the Commission should refrain from adopting
19	rules that mandate a specific level of service. Instead, Sprint recommends that the
20	Commission allow the consumer to drive service levels in a competitive market.
21	
22	PLEASE COMMENT ON MR. POUCHER'S SUGGESTION NUMBER 7.
23	an X-
24	A. Mr. Poucher's suggestion number 7 proposes that the Commission adopt a new rule
25	requiring that all telecommunications companies subject to the rules of the Commission

1	shall also be subject to the rules that require LECs to answer 90 percent of the incoming
2	calls to the Business Office within 30 seconds. Sprint does not support mandated service
3	levels similar to what is mandated to the ILECs. Consumers in a competitive
4	marketplace have a choice of carriers, and if an IXC is not providing adequate service
5	levels to meet the needs of the consumers, they can take their business elsewhere. In the
6	past, the consumer did not have this same freedom for LEC service, and so it made sense
7	to mandate service levels to protect the consumer. Since there is already competitive
8	pressure in the long distance marketplace, Sprint does not believe that imposing standards
9	will add any protection for consumers. The same companies that are "slamming"
10	customers do not comply with existing verification rules, arguably they will not comply
11	with state mandated service level standards. For this reason, implementing more rules
12	will not resolve the problem. As stated previously in this testimony, Sprint believes that
13	service levels should not be mandated by the Commission, but mandated by the consumer
14	in a competitive market. Companies that are fraudulently slamming consumers should be
15	punished. Mandates put in place to ensure that a company intends to handle consumer
16	complaints does nothing to stop the slamming from occurring in the first place.
17	
18	PLEASE COMMENT ON MR. POUCHER'S SUGGESTION NUMBER 8.
19	
20	A. Mr. Poucher's suggestion number 8 asks that the Commission require LECs, ALECs
21	and IXCs to include the last name, address and telephone number in the transmittal orders
22	involving carrier changes. Under Mr. Poucher's proposal, LECs would be required to
23	reject orders for carrier changes when the originating carrier fails to provide the correct
24	last name and address and telephone number. In the past the LECs have required a match
25	on name and telephone number. What the industry found was that computers are not good

1 at matching names. As a result, the consumer experienced needless delay in fulfilling 2 requests for a change in telephone service provider. Consequently, the name match was 3 eliminated, and orders are now processed based on telephone number. Today, the LECs 4 send a confirmation back to the IXC electronically, and if the name and address do not 5 match Sprint's database, steps are taken to correct the data. Sprint believes this is the best way to protect consumers from keying errors and at the same time to provide service 6 7 quickly to consumers desiring a change in long distance providers. 8 9 As previously stated in this testimony, the industry has already tried unsuccessfully to 10 include a name match on a carrier change request. This resulted in needless delay in 11 processing customer requests for a change in service providers. It does not make sense to 12 revert back to a process that was not in the best interest of the majority of consumers. 13 14 PLEASE COMMENT ON MR. POUCHER'S SUGGESTION NUMBER 9. 15 16 A. Mr. Poucher's suggestion number 9 would require LECs and all other billing agencies 17 to prominently display within the first two pages of the customer's bill the name of the 18 presubscribed local, local toll and interexchange carriers. Sprint agrees that the LECs and 19 all other billing agencies should be required to prominently display within the first two 20 pages of the customer's bill the name of the pre-subscribed local, local toll and 21 interexchange carriers, and not the name of the underlying facilities based carrier. 22 However, in testimony filed in this proceeding by Mr. J. Alan Taylor, Chief of the Bureau 23 of Service Evaluation, (Taylor Direct, Page 4, lines 21-25) claims were made that 24 underlying facilities based carriers facilitate many slams through their resale programs. 25 and that requiring the name and the certificate number of the carrier will help ensure that

the sales of

1	underlying carriers do not provide their services to companies that are not certified. Sprin
2	does not bill for resellers utilizing the Sprint network. Sprint is required to include in its
3	tariffs, language that states that the customer reselling or rebilling regulated services mus
4	have a certificate from the Commission. Requiring the name or certificate number of the
5	company billing for services on the LEC bill will provide customers with the knowledge
6	of who their provider is. Although there would be costs associated with enhancing the
7	billing systems for the LBCs, DCCs, and billing vendors, it may be a more
8	attractive solution in terms of cost compared with requiring a separate CIC code for
9	switchless resellers. From a consumer standpoint, Sprint would argue that it is more
10	customer friendly to require the name and toll free number rather than the certification
11	number. As previously stated in this testimony, Sprint supports providing the name of
12	the company providing the service to the consumer on the bill. There would be costs
13	associated with changing billing systems for all parties involved, but it is an attractive
14	proposal for ensuring that consumers understand who is carrying the service.
15	
16	PLEASE COMMENT ON MR. POUCHER'S SUGGESTION NUMBER 10.
17	
18	A. Mr. Poucher's suggestion number 10 would require all LECs and ALECs to publish
19	annually a billing insert that explains a "PIC Freeze" and provides a customer with
20	instructions on how to obtain a "PIC Freeze". In addition, new customers would also
21	receive the notice with their first bill. Sprint believes that requiring LECs and ALECs to
22	publish information explaining the "PIC Freeze" would promote and encourage anti-
23	competitive behavior currently practiced by some ILECs. Sprint has already expressed its
24	concern regarding ILEC abuse of their gatekeeper responsibilities. There is already
25	substantial anti-competitive behavior to support relieving the ILECs of any and all

1 activities related to the PIC Freeze process. For example, Ameritech, on the eve of 2 implementation of "1+" intral_ATA dialing parity, began a campaign throughout its 3 region that sought to capitalize on the slamming problem in the interLATA market to 4 induce its customers to frome their entire accounts. Customers who responded to 5 Ameritech's inducement not only froze their selection of IXC but also froze Ameritech as their provider of "1+". Sprints supports the idea that consumer, should be 6 7 knowledgeable about their rights in obtaining a freeze on their carrier choice. However, 8 as stated previously in this testimony. Sprint recommends that the entire PIC Freeze 9 process be administered by a neutral third party. By not only allowing, but also 10 mandating that ILECs administer the PIC Freeze process, puts the ILEC in the unique position of being able to freeze an entire account to its services. 11 12 13 O PLEASE SUMMARIZE YOUR TESTIMONY. 14 15 A. Sprint believes that the slamming problem must be controlled and supports any 16 initiatives that would assist in eliminating this industry problem. Several of Mr. 17 Poucher's proposals would assist in this endeavor. However, several of Mr. Poucher's 18 recommendations would not resolve the slamming problem and may, in fact, harm 19 competition by authorizing ILEC control over IXCs. In this regard, Sprint cannot support 20 any proposal that maintains this status for ILECs. Sprint further requests that the 21 Commission not impose Rules that would relieve consumers of their financial obligation to pay for service they have received. Any Rule that absolves this obligation would 22 23 increase the number of slamming complaints not reduce them. 24 Sprint believes that if the Commission decides to impose new Rules at this time, carriers

may find they are in jeopardy of non-compliance due to the fact that new State rules may

25

- 1 conflict with existing FCC Rules. The FCC is currently considering appropriate
- 2 regulation designed to minimize slamming. Although these rules may not have been
- 3 totally effective in bringing the problem under control, this may be due to the fact that the
- 4 FCC has not yet imposed the harshest of punishment for offending carriers. However,
- 5 Sprint recommends that the Commission refrain from implementing new Rules until such
- 6 time that the FCC completes its Rulemaking. If the Commission decides to proceed with
- 7 new State Regulations, Sprint requests that the Commission consider how these rules will
- 8 impact existing FCC regulation.

9

10 DOES THIS CONCLUDE YOUR TESTIMONY?

11

12 A. Yes.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the Rebuttal Testimony of Sandee Buysee-Baker and Pre-Hearing Statement, on behalf of Sprint Communications Company Limited Partnership, and Entry of Appearance, was served via United States mail, first class postage paid and properly addressed to the following:

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This 20th day of January, 1998

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