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PRE-FILED DIRECT TESTIMONY  
OF  
CHERYL LAUZON  
BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
ON BEHALF OF  
CHARLOTTE COUNTY, a political subdivision of the  
STATE OF FLORIDA  
DOCKET NO. 990223-TL

- 1 **Q. Please state your name and your business address for the record.**
- 2 A. Cheryl Lauzon, Charlotte County Visitors Bureau, 1600 Tamiami Trail, Suite 100, Port  
3 Charlotte, Florida.
- 4 **Q. What is your position with Charlotte County Government?**
- 5 A. I am the Director of Tourist Development for Charlotte County.
- 6 **Q. How long have you held that position and what are your responsibilities?**
- 7 A. For two years. I serve as the department head for the Tourism Development Department and  
8 the Executive Director of the Tourism Development Council.
- 9 **Q. Docket No. 990223-TL is before the Florida Public Service Commission to review the**  
10 **proposed numbering plan relief for area code 941. The 941 NPA Exhaust**  
11 **Recommended Relief Plan recommends splitting the existing 941 area code into two**  
12 **sectors, with the South Sector acquiring a new area code. The North Sector (which**  
13 **would retain the 941 area code) would include Polk, Manatee, and Sarasota Counties,**  
14 **including the communities of Bartow, Bradenton, Haines City, Lake Wales, Lakeland,**  
15 **Palmetto, Venice and Winter Haven. The South Sector (which would receive a new**  
16 **area code) would include Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, and Okeechobee counties,**  
17 **including the communities of Arcadia, Avon Park, Bonita Springs, Cape Coral, Fort**  
18 **Myers, Naples, North Naples, North Fort Myers, Okeechobee, Port Charlotte and**  
19 **Sebring. According to the Relief Plan, the revised 941 area code service area is forecast**  
20 **to exhaust in about 5.2 years. The new area code service area (including Charlotte**  
21 **County) would exhaust in about 5.9 years. As Director of Tourist Development for**  
22 **Charlotte County, do you have any concerns about this proposed split and the**  
23 **predicted exhaust period?**
- 24 A. Yes. Charlotte County contains several diverse geographic and population areas, resulting  
25 in a psychological perception of different communities. The County and the Tourist  
26 Development Council are in the midst of a major marketing effort to unify the public's  
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1 perception of Charlotte County as one physical travel destination, thus resolving what really  
2 has been an identity problem. The Charlotte County Visitors Bureau has spent approximately  
3 \$60,000 for promotional materials alone. Our only gulf beaches are in Englewood, whereas  
4 the rest of the County is made of bays, rivers, and estuaries. Dividing any part of the  
5 community will set our efforts back years.

6 Charlotte County's businesses just changed their area code three years ago, in 1996. such a  
7 change represents astronomical expenses for a business, especially for those in tourism where  
8 circulation is literally world wide.

9 **Q. If the Commission were to consider alternatives to the proposed North/South split,**  
10 **would you have any recommendation?**

11 A. Yes. Any other solution that would delay the expense of changing area codes would be  
12 preferable.

13 **Q. Does this conclude your direct testimony?**

14 A. Yes, it does.

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