



SARASOTA COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Office of the County Attorney

ORIGINAL

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Jorge L. Fernández
County Attorney

February 1, 2001

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RECORDS AND REPORTING

Ms. Blanca Bayo, Director
Division of Records and Reporting
Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

Re: Docket No. 000604-TL, Area Code Relief for the 941 Area Code

Dear Ms. Bayo:

Attached is the original and fifteen(15) copies of the pre-filed testimony of Shannon Staub, Gregg D. Feagans, Virginia Haley and William W. Couch on behalf of Sarasota County, Florida, a party in the above-referenced proceeding.

Please indicate receipt of this filing on the enclosed copy of this letter and return to the undersigned in the enclosed stamped envelope. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

01525-01
01526-01
01527-01
01528-01

Sincerely,

Kathleen F. Schneider
Assistant County Attorney

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1 **recommends an all services distributed overlay plan for the**
2 **941 Area Code, with an estimated exhaust period of 10 years.**
3 **As County Commissioner, do you have any concerns about a**
4 **distributed overlay as a proposed relief plan?**

5 A. Yes.
6 In my view, the distributed overlay is not in the best interests of the
7 citizens of Sarasota County. It would result in a confusing array of
8 numbers without any regard for geographical boundaries. While I
9 appreciate the extended exhaust period the overlay method
10 provides, the confusion to the public in a community like Sarasota
11 County is too great. Consideration must be given to the
12 demographics of the community. For example, Sarasota County
13 has one of the highest elderly populations in the State. I find it
14 incredible that with a distributed overlay, a single household or
15 business could have multiple area codes, not to mention the fact
16 that any new neighbors or businesses will most definitely have a
17 different area code. It is difficult enough to remember multiple 7-
18 digit numbers, without adding multiple 10-digit numbers to the
19 mix. Moreover, the confusion results not only to the elderly, but to
20 children and visitors to the community. In order for area codes to
21 have any meaning for the individual, they must have a relationship
22 to geographical boundaries.

1 historical perspective is necessary. In 1995, both counties created
2 a bi-county advisory board, made up of appointed citizens who
3 have worked diligently to come up with ideas as to how the two
4 counties could work together to serve Englewood Community as
5 one community, not a split community. The advisory board has
6 given the Commissioners ideas for land planning, transportation
7 planning, utility planning and for emergency management.
8 Over the years, Charlotte County and Sarasota County have tried
9 to bring Englewood together as one community. When people
10 travel in Englewood, they do not pay attention to county lines.
11 For years, the Counties have been working to overcome a
12 perception of divisiveness that Alternative #2 would only
13 exacerbate. Moreover, the Counties are planning major
14 expenditures on transportation routes that require the use of multi-
15 county tax dollars. There is also a \$60 million evacuation route
16 being planned, with infrastructure in place to service both
17 Charlotte County and Sarasota County. In addition, a multi-
18 million dollar downtown revitalization plan has been commenced
19 which will revitalize both Sarasota County and Charlotte County
20 businesses. A library services both Counties; and some Sarasota
21 County students attend a Charlotte County high school. As you
22 can see, it is a total interrelationship between the two counties that
23 a split along the LATA lines would severely undermine.

1 and NANPA assured the counties that number pooling was
2 imminent and, once implemented, would extend the exhaust
3 period. To date, this has not been accomplished.

4 In February 2000, the PSC ordered telephone service providers in
5 the 561, 904 and 954 area codes to return all unused and reserved
6 numbers, imposed criteria for companies requesting new numbers
7 and directed the phone industry to develop a schedule for
8 implementing number pooling. Sarasota County strongly
9 recommends that such measures be adopted statewide.

10 Frequent changing of area codes is extremely costly, confusing and
11 frustrating. Clearly, the old methods of allocation are not working
12 in light of the explosion in telecommunications service providers.

13 As I mentioned, an overlay is not the answer. While it is a quick
14 fix for the industry, it is confusing and burdensome to the citizens.

15 On behalf of Sarasota County Government, I implore the
16 Commission to not only choose Alternative #4 in the present
17 proceeding, but also to immediately adopt rules to implement
18 number pooling throughout the State and to have unused numbers
19 returned.

20 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

21 **A.** Yes, it does.

22

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE
DOCKET NO. 000604-TL**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the foregoing was served by U.S. Mail this 5th day of February, 2001 to the following:

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