Mel Carnahan Governor

Office of the Public Counsel
Harry S Truman Building - Ste. 250
P.O. Box 7800
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

February 9, 1999

FILE'D

FEB - 9 1999

Mr. Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge
Missouri Public Service Commission
P. O. Box 360
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Missouri Public Service Commission

RE:

Southwestern Bell Telephone Company to Provide In-Region InterLATA

Services/Section 271

Case No.: TO-99-227

Dear Mr. Roberts:

Enclosed for filing in the above-referenced case is the original of the Office of the Public Counsel and State of Missouri's Joint Position Statement Regarding Hearing Procedure. I have also on this date mailed and/or hand-delivered the appropriate number of copies to all counsel of record and other interested parties. Please "file" stamp the extra-enclosed copy and return it to this office. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

Michael F. Dandino Senior Public Counsel

MFD:rjr

cc:

Counsel of Record

Other Interested Parites

Enclosure

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

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|-----------------|-----------------------------|
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| Case No.: TO-99 | ssouri Public Commission |

In the Matter of the Application of Southwestern
Bell Telephone Company to Provide Notice of
Intent to File an Application for Authorization to
Provide In-Region InterLATA Services
originating in Missouri Pursuant to Section 271
of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC COUNSEL AND STATE OF MISSOURI'S JOINT POSITION STATEMENT REGARDING HEARING PROCEDURE

The Office of the Public Counsel and the State of Missouri (the "State"), through the Attorney General, appear before the Commission to express their joint concern at the anticipated desire of many of the parties attending the pre-hearing conference to strictly limit the time for cross examining witnesses at the hearing.

This docket is Missouri's best opportunity to really open both the local and long distance markets--something that has not been accomplished elsewhere notwithstanding the passage of the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996. Public Counsel and the State pray that the Commission not lose its focus. The purpose of the hearing is to develop a full and complete evidentiary record to pass on to the Federal Communications Commission with the Commission's recommendation. The convenience of the attorneys and their witnesses must fall a distant second in consideration. We feel the parties should make a good faith effort to fit all the examination within the nine days set for hearing. But the world will not come to an end if the Commission ultimately must add a day or two of hearing to ensure that all parties have a full opportunity to cross examination witnesses and to answer the Commission's questions.

Some parties assert that this case is not a contested hearing. If that is so, then disperse with all restrictions on the ability of parties to produce information to the Commission. Make the process a collaborative one. If the case is a contested hearing, then it becomes a farcical exercise to pretend an evidentiary record is complete when arbitrary time limits are set for producing evidence.

Too much is at stake in this hearing. The telecommunications companies opposed to unlimited cross should understand that the public and consumers like the various agencies and offices of the State of Missouri have as much vested in the outcome of this proceeding as do the carriers. The Office of the Public Counsel, whose represents the consuming public, and the Attorney General, who represents the state agencies that spend taxpayer dollars to purchase local and long distance service, have too great a responsibility to our constituencies to acquiesce in agreements between certain parties to abridge the record in this case. We are confident that the Commission agrees that making the right recommendation to the FCC is worth allowing all the parties to cross examine witnesses to the extent necessary to develop a complete record.

Respectfully submitted,

MARTHA S. HOGERTY

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CERTFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing was mailed, postage prepaid, this 9th day of February, 1999 to the parties on the attached list:

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