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Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Michael Balmoris 202-418-0253
Email: mbalmori@fcc.gov

FCC AUTHORIZES QWEST TO PROVIDE LONG DISTANCE SERVICE IN NEW MEXICO, OREGON AND SOUTH DAKOTA

Washington, D.C. – The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) today announced that it voted to approve Qwest’s application to provide in-region, interLATA service originating in New Mexico, Oregon and South Dakota. Approval of Qwest’s multi-state application promises benefits to consumers by making increased competition in all markets for telecommunications services possible.

With the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (1996 Act), Congress envisioned fundamental, pro-competitive changes in the telecommunications markets by making a Bell Operating Company’s (BOC) entry into the long distance market subject to the BOC first opening its local service monopoly to competition. A BOC satisfies this contingency by demonstrating compliance with section 271 of the 1996 Act. After a BOC files a section 271 long distance application with the FCC, the FCC has 90 days to determine whether a BOC has taken the statutorily required steps to open its local telecommunications markets to competition, including compliance with the 1996 Act’s section 271 14-point “competitive checklist.”

Since the passage of the 1996 Act, the FCC has denied five long distance applications and now has approved applications to provide in-region, long distance service in 41 states and the District of Columbia. Additionally, applications for 16 states have been withdrawn. Currently, there are section 271 applications for two states – SBC’s application for Michigan and Qwest’s application for Minnesota – pending before the FCC. A summary of all section 271 applications can be accessed at the following FCC web page:

www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Common_Carrier/in-region_applications/

The FCC emphasizes that Qwest must continue to comply with the section 271 checklist requirements, and the Commission has a number of enforcement tools at its disposal to ensure compliance, including imposing penalties or suspension of approval.

-FCC-

Docket No.: 03-11

Action by the Commission April 15, 2003, by Memorandum Opinion and Order (FCC 03-81). Commissioner Copps concurring and issuing a statement; Commissioner Martin approving in part, concurring in part, and issuing a statement.

Wireline Competition Bureau Staff Contact: Kim Cook at 202-418-1580

News about the Federal Communications Commission can also be found on the Commission's web site www.fcc.gov.