

**Before the  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Access Charge Reform for Incumbent	)	CC Docket No. 98-77
Local Exchange Carriers Subject to	)	
Rate-of-Return Regulation	)	

**ORDER**

**Adopted: July 15, 1998**

**Released: July 15, 1998**

By the Chief, Competitive Pricing Division, Common Carrier Bureau:

1. In this Order, we grant the July 10, 1998 motion of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc. and the Rural Telephone Coalition (hereinafter jointly referenced as petitioners),<sup>1</sup> requesting that the Commission extend the filing deadline for comments and reply comments in the above-referenced proceeding. The comment filing deadline is extended from July 17 to August 17, 1998. The reply comment filing deadline is extended from August 17 to September 17, 1998.

2. Petitioners state that their efforts to inform their respective members of changes proposed in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) and to assist member companies in analyzing potential effects on subscribers are complicated by the widely varying circumstances that exist among incumbent local exchange carriers (LECs) subject to rate-of-return regulation. According to petitioners, "the process of analyzing potential effects of access reform, and developing consensus positions on specific proposals, has been difficult and time-consuming."<sup>2</sup> Petitioners state that more time is needed to assess the impact of various proposals on differently-situated association members.

3. While it is the policy of the Commission that motions for extension of time will not be routinely granted,<sup>3</sup> in this instance we find that grant of this extension is consistent with the public interest. In the NPRM, the Commission recognized "that access reform for the smaller, rate-of-return LECs may raise new or different issues that we did not have to

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<sup>1</sup> The Rural Telephone Coalition is composed of the National Rural Telecom Association, the National Telephone Cooperative Association, and the Organization for the Promotion and Advancement of Small Telecommunications Companies.

<sup>2</sup> National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc. and the Rural Telephone Coalition Motion at 2.

<sup>3</sup> 47 C.F.R. § 1.46(a).

address in our proceeding involving the typically larger, price cap LECs."<sup>4</sup> Granting an extension of time will not unduly delay the resolution of the proceeding if it allows the development of a more complete record on the fundamental changes proposed in the NPRM. A fuller, more complete record will facilitate the resolution of issues raised in this proceeding, without imposing any significant adverse impacts on other participants in this proceeding.

4. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED, pursuant to 47 C.F.R. §§ 0.91, 0.291, and 1.46(a), that the joint Motion for Extension of Time filed by the National Exchange Carrier Association and the Rural Telephone Coalition IS GRANTED.

5. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that comments are due August 17, 1998 and reply comments are due September 17, 1998.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION



Jane E. Jackson  
Chief, Competitive Pricing Division  
Common Carrier Bureau

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<sup>4</sup> Access Charge Reform for Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers Subject to Rate-of-Return Regulation, CC Docket No. 98-77, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 98-101, ¶ 4 (1998).