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Federal Communications Commission
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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. Circ 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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COMMON CARRIER ACTION

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION DENIES AUTOMATIC GRANT OF AT&T'S APPLICATION TO DISCONTINUE ITS TOLL FREE DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE SERVICE

Washington, D.C. – Today, the Common Carrier Bureau of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) denied an automatic grant of AT&T Communications' application to discontinue its Toll Free Directory Assistance Service, 1-800-555-1212. The service allows persons to call the service to obtain the toll-free service number associated with a particular toll-free service listing.

AT&T filed its application to discontinue providing this service on November 12, 1999, to be effective March 31, 2000, and cited the cost of providing toll-free directory assistance service and the declining value derived from the service. Applications to discontinue service are normally granted automatically unless it is shown that customers may be unable to receive service or a reasonable substitute or that the public convenience and necessity may be otherwise adversely affected.

Following AT&T's application to discontinue service, numerous comments objecting to AT&T's application were filed with the FCC. The comments argue that there may be no reasonably substitutable service and that the public interest may be adversely affected. The nature of the objections filed with the FCC include:

- not all customers have or can afford access to the Internet;
- additional fees will be implemented for this service;
- elderly and disabled people depend on the service;
- many AT&T employees (some filing comments as members of Communications Workers of America) will be harmed; and,
- small businesses will incur economic hardship.

Accordingly, AT&T has been notified that its application to discontinue its Toll Free Directory Assistance Service, 1-800-555-1212, will not be granted automatically, but will be acted upon based on its merits, following further examination of both the comments received and any responsive comments that AT&T files.

Action by the Common Carrier Bureau December 10, 1999 Public Notice, DA 99-2769, by the Chief, Network Services Division, Common Carrier Bureau.

-Common Carrier Bureau-

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