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COMMON CARRIER ACTION

JOINT BOARD STAFF RELEASES COMPREHENSIVE MONITORING REPORT ON UNIVERSAL SERVICE

Washington, D.C. -- The staff of the Federal-State Joint Board on universal service has released its most recent Monitoring Report on Universal Service. This report reflects information on the telephone industry filed with the FCC through December 1999.

The Report released today presents current data in each of the eleven subject categories selected for monitoring: 1) industry revenues and contributions; 2) low income support; 3) high cost support; 4) schools and libraries support; 5) rural health care support; 6) subscribership and penetration; 7) rates and price indexes; 8) network usage and growth; 9) quality of service; 10) infrastructure; and 11) revenues, expenses and investment.

A monitoring program was established in the mid-1980's, at the recommendation of the separations Joint Board, to track trends related to universal service and related matters. Since then the Joint Board staff has prepared Monitoring Reports at least once a year--a compendium of hundreds of pages of statistical data on subscribership and penetration, loop costs, separations factors, universal service fund payments, etc. In 1998 the publication of this report was changed from the separations Joint Board staff to the universal service Joint Board staff, and the frequency was increased to twice a year. This is the third Monitoring Report from the universal service Joint Board staff.

The Monitoring Report is unique in that it is the only document that includes information on every local telephone company in the nation. The FCC has not imposed any new reporting burdens on any company to generate the information. Instead it uses data which the National Exchange Carrier Association collects for its own needs, data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and other organizations, and publicly available ARMIS submissions. Another characteristic of the monitoring reports is that they are staff reports. They are not intended to be policy documents and contain only enough text to describe the tables.

A copy of the Report is available for inspection in the FCC's Reference Information Center, Courtyard Level, 445 12th Street, SW. The Report can be downloaded by section from the **FCC-State Link** internet site, which can be reached at http://www.fcc.gov/ccb/stats on the World Wide Web. Names for print image files: mrd99-0.pdf, mrd99-1.pdf, ..., mrd99-11.pdf for the introduction and each section separately. Names for condensed files in word processor (Word 97) and spreadsheet (Lotus 123 .wk4 or Excel 97) formats: mrd99-0.zip, mrd99-1.zip, ..., mrd99-11.zip.

Copies of the Report are available for purchase from the Commission's duplicating contractor, International Transcription Service, Inc. (ITS) at (202) 857-3800.

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