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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:
October 12, 2000

PRESS STATEMENT OF FCC CHAIRMAN WILLIAM F. KENNARD ON UNAUTHORIZED RELEASE OF COMMISSION DOCUMENTS

Washington, DC -- Recently, we have had the misfortune of witnessing the leaks of several pre-decisional Commission documents. In each of these instances, I have asked our Inspector General, Walker Feaster, to investigate these leaks.

We are only aware of these leaks, however, if someone tells us about them, or worse, if we read about them in the press. While we cannot and should not deny the press its freedom to speak, we can require that parties regulated or practicing before this Commission return any documents improperly leaked from the Commission. While this requirement cannot prevent a leak, it will inform us that a leak has occurred. By prohibiting the party that receives the item from further distributing it, we also help alleviate the inequities inherent in one party having access to information that an opposing party may not. It is not too much to expect parties who appear before the Commission to do their part to respect and promote the integrity of our processes.

This Commission cannot, and should not, tolerate leaks of internal, nonpublic Commission documents. We must protect the integrity of the Commission's decision-making process. This item helps us to do so.

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