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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. Cir. 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 19, 2002

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION AUTHORIZES VERIZON TO PROVIDE LONG DISTANCE SERVICE IN MAINE

Washington, D.C. – Today, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced that it voted to approve Verizon's application to provide in-region, interLATA service originating in Maine. Approval of Verizon's application promises substantial benefits for the states' consumers in the form of enhanced competition in both the local and long distance markets.

Competing carriers have approximately 50,600 lines in Maine. Roughly 38,800 of these lines are served through resale and approximately 11,800 lines using unbundled network elements or their own facilities.

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 14 states. Additionally, applications for seven states have been withdrawn. Currently, there are section 271 applications for six states – Verizon's New Jersey and Qwest's Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Nebraska and North Dakota – pending before the Commission. 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/

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

-FCC-

Docket No.: WC 02-61

Action by the Commission June 18, 2002, by Report and Order (FCC 02-187).
Chairman Powell and Commissioners Abernathy, Copps, and Martin.

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on the Commission's web site www.fcc.gov.