

**SEPARATE STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER KATHLEEN Q. ABERNATHY**

Re: Application by Qwest Communications International, Inc. for Authorization To Provide In-Region, InterLATA Services in Arizona, WC Docket No. 03-194, Memorandum Opinion and Order.

This Order, granting the final section 271 application, marks the end of a long, transformative process that has opened local telecommunications markets and augmented long distance competition throughout the country. Our state colleagues deserve much of the credit; their comprehensive workshops and hearings on OSS issues, UNE pricing, performance assurance plans, and other key issues laid the groundwork for all of our decisions under section 271. I also want to recognize the talented staff of the Wireline Competition Bureau for providing complex and incisive analysis under very tight deadlines.

While we have authorized Bell entry into the long distance market in every state, our work is plainly not done. We must intensify our focus on enforcement, pursuant to section 271(d)(6), to ensure that the local markets remain open to competition. The Commission also must complete its examination of the regulatory framework that applies to the Bell companies' provision of long distance service. If a BOC integrates its operations after the sunset of the section 272 requirements, to what extent should dominant carrier regulations be retained? I look forward to working with my colleagues on an answer to that important question. I also hope that the Commission promptly completes the pending rulemaking concerning possible elimination of the ban on sharing operation, installation, and maintenance functions. Dominant carrier regulations, the OI&M rule, and other legacy regulations may not be necessary in today's increasingly competitive marketplace. I do not know at this point precisely what level of regulatory oversight we do need, but I urge the Commission to complete its review so that we can ensure that our rules are tailored to the current environment.