

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

IN THE MATTER OF FREEDOM)	FINDINGS OF FACT,
COMMUNICATIONS CORP.'S FAILURE TO)	CONCLUSIONS OF LAW
SUBMIT A REPORT AND PAY THE GROSS)	AND FINAL ORDER; NOTICE
RECEIPTS TAX)	OF ENTRY OF FINAL
)	ORDER
)	TC98-159

On September 21, 1998, the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) issued an Order for and Notice of Show Cause Hearing against Freedom Communications Corp. for failure to submit an annual report and pay the gross receipts tax. The hearing was held as scheduled on October 20, 1998, at 1:30 p.m., in the Commission's Conference Room, State Capitol Building, Pierre, South Dakota. The reason for the hearing was to give Freedom Communications Corp. an opportunity to show cause why the Commission should not revoke its Certificate of Authority, or other specified actions, for failure to pay the gross receipts tax as required by SDCL 49-1A-1. Commissioners Burg, Nelson, and Schoenfelder were present. Also present were Camron Hoseck, Commission Staff Attorney and Sue Cichos, Business Manager for the Commission. No representative of Freedom Communications Corp. appeared at the hearing. After hearing the testimony, the Commission voted unanimously to revoke Freedom Communications Corp.'s Certificate of Authority for failure to pay the gross receipts tax.

The Commission, having heard the testimony presented at the hearing, makes the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law:

FINDINGS OF FACT

I

Freedom Communications Corp. is a telecommunications company holding a Certificate of Authority, issued by this Commission, to provide telecommunications services in South Dakota.

II

Sue Cichos, Business Manager for the Commission, sent letters to Freedom Communications Corp. on May 7, 1998, and July 7, 1998, requesting payment of the gross receipts tax as authorized by SDCL 49-1A-1. She testified that Freedom Communications Corp. never paid the gross receipts tax.

III

A copy of the Order for and Notice of Show Cause Hearing was sent by certified mail to Freedom Communications Corp.

IV

No representative of Freedom Communications Corp. appeared at the hearing to show cause why the Commission should not revoke its Certificate of Authority.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

I

The Commission has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL 49-1A-3, 49-1A-4, 49-1A-5, 49-1A-6, and 49-31-3.

II

Pursuant to 49-1A-3, the Commission assesses a tax of .0015 or \$250, whichever is greater, on the annual intrastate gross receipts received by a telecommunications company from the company's customers within the state of South Dakota. Pursuant to 49-1A-5, the tax is due on June first of each year.

III

Freedom Communications Corp. has failed to pay the gross receipts tax.

IV

The Commission has the authority, under SDCL 49-31-3, to suspend or revoke a Certificate of Authority granted to a company for a willful violation of the laws of this state. Based on the failure of Freedom Communications Corp. to pay the gross receipts tax in violation of 49-1A-5, the Commission revokes Freedom Communications Corp.'s Certificate of Authority.

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is therefore

ORDERED, that the Certificate of Authority granted to Freedom Communications Corp. by this Commission is hereby revoked and shall be returned to the Commission within thirty (30) days from the date of this Order.

NOTICE OF ENTRY OF ORDER

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that this Order was duly entered on the 29th day of October, 1998. Pursuant to SDCL 1-26-32, this Order will take effect 10 days after the date of receipt or failure to accept delivery of the decision by the parties.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 29th day of October, 1998.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE	
The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, by facsimile or by first class mail, in properly addressed envelopes, with charges prepaid thereon.	
By:	<u>Helaine Kelbo</u>
Date:	<u>10/30/98</u>
(OFFICIAL SEAL)	

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

James A. Burg
JAMES A. BURG, Chairman

Pam Nelson
PAM NELSON, Commissioner

Laska Schoenfelder
LASKA SCHOENFELDER, Commissioner