

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE FILING BY DICKEY)	ORDER APPROVING
RURAL TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE AND ITS)	DIALING PARITY
WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY, DICKEY)	IMPLEMENTATION PLANS
RURAL COMMUNICATIONS, INC. FOR)	
APPROVAL OF PETITION FOR SUSPENSION)	TC99-041
AND MODIFICATION OF DIALING PARITY)	

On April 19, 1999, Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative and Dickey Rural Communications, Inc. filed for approval of their petition for suspension and modification of dialing parity. Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative and Dickey Rural Communications, Inc. each have fewer than 2% of the nation's subscriber lines installed in the aggregate. Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 251(f)(2), Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative and Dickey Rural Communications, Inc. petitioned the Commission for a suspension and modification of the requirement for implementation of intraLATA dialing parity in its service areas until June 30, 2000. Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative and Dickey Rural Communications, Inc. stated that "[t]he grounds for the petition are that suspension and modification are: a) necessary to avoid imposing requirements that are unduly economically burdensome and infeasible, and b) consistent with the public interest, convenience and necessity. The compressed schedule mandated by the FCC's 1999 Order [CC Docket No. 96-98, Order adopted March 19 and released March 23, 1999, FCC 99-54] is burdensome and infeasible for small LECs to develop and administer plans for timely notification of their subscribers and interexchange carriers regarding subscribers' selection of intraLATA toll providers, and for small LECs to develop fully compensatory local exchange access rates to replace the current arrangement."

The Commission requested comments on Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative and Dickey Rural Communications, Inc.'s petition for suspension and modification. Commission Staff recommended denying the petition.

On June 3, 1999, Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative and Dickey Rural Communications, Inc. filed their petition for suspension and modification affidavit that they intended to file with the North Dakota Public Service Commission (NDPSC) for a June 15, 1999, hearing before the NDPSC. The companies requested that the Commission consider mirroring the outcome of the NDPSC hearing.

At its June 22, 1999, meeting, the Commission considered whether to grant the petition. The Commission has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL 49-31-80 and 49-31-81, ARSD 20:10:32:39, and the federal Telecommunications Act of 1996, specifically §§ 251 and 252. Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative and Dickey Rural Communications, Inc. did not appear at the meeting. Commission Staff informed the Commission that the NDPSC had to delay its hearing until July so the NDPSC had not ruled on the issue yet. The Commission voted unanimously to grant Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative and Dickey Rural Communications, Inc. a suspension and modification until September 15, 1999. The Commission found, pursuant to SDCL 49-31-81 and section 251(f)(2), the suspension and modification was necessary to avoid imposing a requirement that was technically infeasible since Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative and Dickey Rural Communications, Inc. had not yet begun to implement dialing parity pending the ruling on their petition for suspension and modification. The Commission further found that the suspension and modification was consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity. In making this determination, the Commission noted that the suspension and modification that it granted was for a shorter time period than requested by the companies. The Commission found that the companies' request for a suspension and modification until June 30, 2000, was not adequately justified by the companies.

On August 4, 1999, the Commission received a letter from Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative and Dickey Rural Communications, Inc., requesting the Commission to consider mirroring the North Dakota Public Service Commission order issued July 16, 1999, extending, until January 1, 2000, the suspension and modification of the requirements of dialing parity. At its regularly scheduled meeting on August 17, 1999, the Commission considered this request. Commission Staff recommended that the Commission grant the request and require the companies to file a dialing parity plan by November 15, 1999. The Commission unanimously voted to grant the request to mirror the North Dakota Public Service Commission's order No. PU-405-99-204 extending until January 1, 2000, the suspension and modification of the requirements of dialing parity. The Commission also required the companies to file a dialing parity plan by November 15, 1999.

On September 29, 1999, the companies filed their dialing parity plans requesting that the Commission consider mirroring the dialing parity plans filed with the North Dakota Public Service Commission. At its duly noticed meeting of October 19, 1999, the Commission considered this matter. Commission Staff stated their concerns with the customer letter and requested the Commission to order the companies to follow the Commission's prior orders regarding the customer letter. The Commission unanimously voted to order the companies to follow the Commission's prior orders regarding the customer letter. On October 25, 1999, the companies filed their revised toll dialing parity plans for their South Dakota customers. On November 3, 1999, the companies filed a revised page to the plans.

On November 15, 1999, at its regularly scheduled meeting, the Commission considered whether to approve Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative and Dickey Rural Communications, Inc's amended plans. The Commission voted unanimously to approve Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative and Dickey Rural Communications, Inc's amended intraLATA dialing parity implementation plans. The Commission finds the plans comply with the applicable FCC and Commission orders.

It is therefore

ORDERED, that Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative and Dickey Rural Communications, Inc's amended dialing parity implementation plans are approved.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 8th day of December, 1999.

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>Delaine Kalbo</u>
Date: <u>12/8/99</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