

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF)
HEARTLAND TELECOMMUNICATIONS)
COMPANY OF IOWA D/B/A HICKORY TECH)
CORPORATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF)
AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE)
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN)
SOUTH DAKOTA)

**ORDER GRANTING
CERTIFICATE OF
AUTHORITY**

TC97-007

On January 16, 1997, the Public Utilities Commission (Commission), in accordance with SDCL 49-31-3 and ARSD 20:10:24:02, received an application for a certificate of authority from Heartland Telecommunications Company of Iowa d/b/a Hickory Tech Corporation (Heartland).

Heartland seeks authority to operate as a telecommunications company and provide local exchange service within the state of South Dakota. A proposed tariff was filed by Heartland. The geographic areas in which Heartland will offer these services are the portion of the Hawarden, Iowa, exchange and the portion of the Akron, Iowa, exchange located in South Dakota. Heartland purchased 11 exchanges from U S WEST Communications, Inc. (TC96-089), two of which extend into South Dakota. The purchase was approved by the Iowa Utilities Board on May 30, 1996.

On January 16, 1997, the Commission electronically transmitted notice of the filing and the intervention deadline of January 31, 1997, to interested individuals and entities. No petitions to intervene or comments were filed and at its regularly scheduled March 4, 1997, meeting, the Commission considered Heartland's request for a certificate of authority. Commission Staff recommended granting a certificate of authority.

The Commission finds that it has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to Chapter 49-31, specifically 49-31-3 and ARSD 20:10:24:02 and 20:10:24:03. The Commission finds that Heartland has met the legal requirements established for the granting of a certificate of authority. Heartland has, in accordance with SDCL 49-31-3, demonstrated sufficient technical, financial and managerial capabilities to offer telecommunications services in South Dakota. The Commission approves Heartland's application for a certificate of authority. As the Commission's final decision in this matter, it is therefore

ORDERED, that Heartland's application for a certificate of authority is hereby granted, effective April 10, 1997, as requested by Heartland. It is

FURTHER ORDERED, that Heartland shall file informational copies of tariff changes with the Commission as the changes occur.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 11th day of March, 1997.

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 first class mail, in properly addressed envelopes, with charges prepaid thereon.
By: <u>Delaine Kalbo</u>
Date: <u>3/12/97</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