

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

IN THE MATTER OF APPLICATION OF)	ORDER GRANTING
SSTELECOM, INC. FOR A CERTIFICATE OF)	CERTIFICATE OF
AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE LOCAL EXCHANGE)	AUTHORITY
SERVICES IN SOUTH DAKOTA)	TC05-223

On December 23, 2005, the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received an application for a certificate of authority from SSTELECOM, Inc. (SSTELECOM). On February 15, 2006, the Commission received an amended application from SSTELECOM. A proposed tariff was filed by SSTELECOM.

On, December 29, 2005, the Commission electronically transmitted notice of the filing and the intervention deadline of January 13, 2006, to interested individuals and entities. At its regularly scheduled February 28, 2006, meeting, the Commission considered SSTELECOM's request for a certificate of authority. Commission Staff recommended granting a certificate of authority, subject to a continuous \$25,000 surety bond, and subject to rural safeguards. Commission Staff further recommended that ARSD 20:10:32:03(11) be granted confidential status.

The Commission finds that it has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapter 49-31, specifically 49-31-69 and ARSD 20:10:32:03. The Commission finds that SSTELECOM has met the legal requirements established for the granting of a certificate of authority. SSTELECOM has, in accordance with SDCL 49-31-71, demonstrated sufficient technical, financial and managerial capabilities to offer telecommunications services in South Dakota. Further, the Commission finds that there is good cause to grant confidential treatment to subparagraph (11) of ARSD 20:10:32:03.

The Commission approves SSTELECOM's application for a certificate of authority, subject to a continuous \$25,000 surety bond, and subject to rural safeguards. The certificate of authority for SSTELECOM shall authorize it to offer local exchange services in South Dakota, except in those areas served by a rural telephone company. In the future, should SSTELECOM choose to provide local exchange services statewide, with respect to rural telephone companies, SSTELECOM will have to come before the Commission in another proceeding before being able to provide local service in that rural service area pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 253(f) which allows the Commission to require a company that seeks to provide service in a rural service area to meet the requirements in 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1) for designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier. In addition, the granting of statewide certification will not affect the exemptions, suspensions, and modifications for rural telephone companies found in 47 U.S.C. § 251(f). It is therefore

ORDERED, that SSTelecom's application for a certificate of authority to provide local exchange services is granted, subject to a continuous \$25,000 surety bond; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that SSTelecom shall file informational copies of its price list before offering local exchange service and shall file changes with the Commission as the changes occur; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the Commission shall authorize SSTelecom to offer its local exchange services in South Dakota, except in those areas served by a rural telephone company; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the Commission authorizes confidential treatment to subparagraph (11) of ARSD 20:10:32:03.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 16th day of March, 2006.

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>Tina Douglas</u>
Date:	<u>3/20/06</u>
(OFFICIAL SEAL)	

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Robert K. Sahr
ROBERT K. SAHR, Chairman

Dustin M. Johnson
DUSTIN M. JOHNSON, Commissioner

Gary Hanson
GARY HANSON, Commissioner