

To whom it may concern:

I have a concern with the current and some proposed systems for allocating toll free numbers. I work for a family owned and operated business that was started from scratch in 1998, and has earned thousands of positive online reviews from customers. We have tried for several years to acquire a great toll free number, as we service many areas that are long distance from our offices. Our efforts however, have been unsuccessful. I have even applied for disconnected vanity numbers in order to trade them for one that is useful to me. I could not even get one of those. The process is terrible, and I always see useful toll-free numbers fall into the hands of people who have no real use for them or to scalpers.

While waiting many years to get even one useful toll-free vanity number, I set out to get our numbers in local markets. This of course works in some areas, but not most. The local numbers are either occupied or the exchanges don't exist. And, if a useful number is available, it is often long distance for all or some of the areas and customers we serve. This process has been difficult and costly, but it has at least been a band-aid for trying to get our name out. One great vanity number can reach far more potential customers than various local ones. The extremely limited amount of time with each opportunity to reach a customer is wasted by either listing each digit in the phone number (i.e. "call four eight zero, one two three, four five six seven" for a short radio ad) or the random numbers are lost to memory in the case of tv, billboards, and decals on our service vehicles.

I feel that the process has shut out many deserving businesses that could potentially expand and grow with a better way to have potential customers contact them. With the vast array of numbers in the spectrum, these thousands of businesses could expand with the cumulative effect of increased job creation and a growing economy. As it stands, many of these useful numbers are sitting unused in a hoarder's trunk or are held for sale at prices that are not cost effective for potential users. Please consider allocating new numbers to actual customers like myself, rather than hoarders and speculators.

Thank you.

Michael Brady