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October 12, 1995

Mr. William F. Caton, Acting Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 222
Washington, D. C. 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Re: Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, CC Docket No. 95-116

Dear Mr. Caton:

Enclosed are an original and nine copies of the Reply Comments of Cincinnati Bell Telephone in the above referenced proceeding. Additional copies are also being provided to the Policy and Program Planning Division and International Transcription Services, Inc., as instructed in paragraph 83 of the above document. A duplicate original copy of this letter and attached Reply Comments is also provided. Please date stamp this as acknowledgment of its receipt and return it. Questions regarding these Reply Comments may be directed to Mr. James R. Lowell at the above address or by telephone on (513) 397-7260.

Sincerely,

Peggy A. Peckham
Director - Legislative &
Regulatory Planning

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Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

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OCT 12 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

In the Matter of)
)
Telephone Number Portability) CC Docket No. 95-116
) RM 8535

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REPLY COMMENTS OF CINCINNATI BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY

Cincinnati Bell Telephone Company ("CBT") files these reply comments in response to the initial comments filed by various interested parties on September 12, 1995 in the above-captioned proceeding.

I. **The Implementation Of Telephone Number Portability Will Represent A Major Change In National Telecommunications Policy.**

The implementation of telephone number portability will represent a major change in national telecommunications policy. Before making such a major policy change, the Commission must carefully study the available options and select the option that will best serve the public interest. CBT submits that this selection process should be guided first and foremost by a careful cost-benefit analysis of each option.

II. **Given The Tremendous Costs That Are Likely To Be Associated With Implementation Of Number Portability, The Commission Should Reject Suggestions That It Adopt An Interim Solution And Proceed Directly Toward The Adoption Of A Long-Term, National Solution.**

Whatever number portability solution is ultimately selected, its implementation and ongoing operation will involve very significant costs. These costs should not be compounded

by the implementation of interim solutions. Accordingly, CBT supports those commenters that urge the Commission to proceed directly toward the adoption of a long-term, national solution.¹ CBT believes that mandating an interim number portability solution is not necessary to promote local exchange competition. Indeed, CBT submits that requiring all carriers to implement a specified interim solution would only serve to waste resources that could be used to implement an appropriate long-term solution.

The initial and ongoing costs that are likely to be associated with the implementation of number portability demand that companies be required to only make a one-time commitment. GTE estimates that implementing a number portability plan with full location portability could cost \$1.65 billion, while its proposed plan, under which only service provider portability would be available, would cost approximately \$35 million.² Extrapolating GTE's estimates to the national level, these figures become \$19.8 billion and \$420 million respectively. CBT realizes that certain assumptions underlying GTE's estimates may vary among providers and therefore may not apply at the national level; however, they do serve to provide an indication of the general magnitude of the costs involved. Resources would be needlessly and inefficiently exhausted with the implementation of an interim plan now, and a long-term plan later, or with the implementation of conflicting plans in different states which may need to be reconciled at a later date. More importantly, resources which could have been used to deploy other new services may well be depleted under such an approach.

¹ See, e.g., USTA Comments at p. 4; AT&T Comments at p. 9.

² GTE Comments, at Appendix A.

III. The Work Underway In Several States To Solve The Problems Associated With Number Portability Should Not Be Ignored; However, The Commission Must Assure The Adoption Of A Uniform, National Solution.

Several states have taken important steps toward solving the problems associated with number portability.³ CBT submits that the Commission should work with these states to adopt a single, consistent national solution which incorporates the best elements of these state initiatives. CBT agrees with those commenters who believe that states should be encouraged to continue number portability inquiries and trials in order to provide information until such time as the Commission adopts and implements a permanent, long-term solution.⁴ However, as several commenters suggested, the states must recognize that state-specific number portability solutions which are inconsistent or incompatible with the national plan cannot be permitted to exist.⁵ This point should be emphasized explicitly in any long-term solution adopted by the Commission.

³ For example, on September 27 1995 the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio released an entry inviting comments on a set of proposed rules to govern local exchange competition in Ohio. See, Commission Investigation Relative to the Establishment of Local Exchange Competition and Other Competitive Issues, Case No. 95-845-TP-COI, Entry, adopted September 27, 1995. These proposed rules include a provision dealing with number portability.

⁴ See, e.g., GTE Comments at pp. 21-22; NARUC Comments at p.6; and AT&T Comments, at p. 6.

⁵ See, e.g., BellSouth Comments at pp. 50-52; GTE Comments at p. 21-22; and ICC Comments at p. 15.

IV. Proper Cost Recovery Is Essential.

Proper cost recovery must be a fundamental element of any national number portability solution that is adopted by the Commission. Proper cost recovery does not mean that telephone number portability should be treated as a universal service which is subsidized by all customers. Rather, as several commenters correctly noted, the fundamental principle in cost recovery should be to ensure that all costs are equitably recovered from the cost-causers.⁶ CBT submits that all competitive providers of local service and interexchange carriers that benefit from the existence of number portability should provide the initial investment for its implementation. Following implementation, the ongoing costs should be recovered from those customers who elect to use, or directly benefit from the availability of, the service.

V. The Commission Should Specify An Industry Body To Develop The Details Of Any Long-Term, National Plan.

CBT agrees with those commenters who urge the Commission to specify an industry body to develop the details of any long-term, national plan. For example, USTA suggests that the Commission should issue an order which selects an industry body or advisory group to develop, consistent with the Commission's mandatory specifications, the specific details of the long-term solution, subject to a specific timetable. CBT supports this proposal and believes the industry body selected by the Commission should be charged with producing a specific recommendation for public comment by not later than March 31, 1996. Unless this time frame is met, state

⁶ See, e.g., Bell Atlantic Comments at p. 21; BellSouth Comments at pp. 55-57; and Ad Hoc Comments at p. 21.

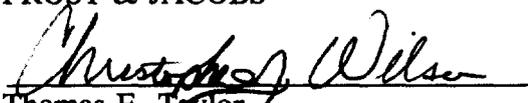
requirements may become operative and LECs may be forced to implement inconsistent interim number portability solutions.

VI. Conclusion

CBT submits that the Commission should reject suggestions that it adopt an interim number portability solution and proceed directly toward the adoption of a long-term, national solution. CBT further submits that the FCC must ensure that all costs associated with the implementation and ongoing operation of this long-term, national solution are equitably recovered from the cost-causers.

Respectfully submitted,

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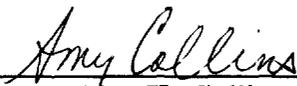
Attorneys for Cincinnati Bell
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Dated: October 12, 1995

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that copies of the foregoing **Reply Comments of Cincinnati Bell Telephone Company** have been delivered by first class United States Mail, postage prepaid, on October 12, 1995, to the persons on the attached service list.



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