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

DISPATCHED BY

In the Matter of	)	DA 96-483
	)	
Federal-State Joint Board on	)	CC Docket No. 96-45
Universal Service	)	
	)	

**ORDER**

Adopted: March 29, 1996; Released: April 1, 1996

By the Chief, Common Carrier Bureau:

1. This action extends by four calendar days the deadlines for filing comments and reply comments in response to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Order Establishing Joint Board (NPRM), FCC 96-93, adopted and released March 8, 1996. The new deadline for filing comments is April 12, 1996. The new deadline for filing reply comments is May 7, 1996.

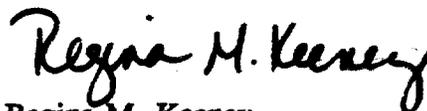
2. On March 20, 1996, the following groups filed a joint request for a thirty-day extension of both the comment deadline and the reply comment deadline: the Consumer Federation of America; Alliance for Community Media; American Library Association; Benton Foundation; Center for Media Education; Consortium for School Networking; National Education Association; National School Boards Association; People for the American Way Action Fund; United Church of Christ, Office of Communications; and United States Catholic Conference (hereinafter "petitioners"). The petitioners argue that an extension of time is necessary because, as public interest and non-profit organizations, they have "limited human and monetary resources" to allocate for the preparation of responsive comments. The petitioners note that, as "primary beneficiaries of the statute at issue," their participation is essential in order for the Commission to compile a complete record. Further, the petitioners argue that inasmuch as the Commission has requested that interested parties file joint comments, such parties require additional time to coordinate their efforts. In addition, the petitioners maintain that because the NPRM was released in the afternoon on Friday, March 8, 1996, it was not generally available until Monday, March 11, 1996, and, thus, the comment period was effectively shortened. The petitioners also note that several religious holidays, such as Passover, Good Friday and Easter, fall just prior to the end of the comment period. Finally, the petitioners contend that several of the parties interested in commenting on this NPRM require an extension because they are involved in other Commission proceedings implementing the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

3. The Commission does not routinely grant extensions of time.<sup>1</sup> In this case, an extension of time for the full period requested would seriously jeopardize the Joint Board's ability to issue a recommended decision within the statutory deadline set forth in the Act. Nonetheless, we recognize that logistical difficulties in obtaining the NPRM may have caused a brief delay for some parties, particularly parties located outside the Washington, D.C. area and parties that do not usually participate in FCC proceedings. Thus, we find that the public interest would be served by granting a limited extension for filing comments until April 12, 1996 and granting a limited extension for filing reply comments until May 7, 1996.

4. Accordingly, pursuant to Section 5(c) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and Sections 0.91, 0.291, and 1.46 of the Commission's Rules, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that the request of the Consumer Federation of America; Alliance for Community Media; American Library Association; Benton Foundation; Center for Media Education; Consortium for School Networking; National Education Association; National School Boards Association; People for the American Way Action Fund; United Church of Christ, Office of Communications; and United States Catholic Conference for a thirty day extension of time for filing comments **IS DENIED**.

5. **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that an extension of time until April 12, 1996 for filing comments and until May 7, 1996 for filing reply comments **IS GRANTED** to all parties wishing to comment in this proceeding.

**FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**



Regina M. Keeney  
Chief, Common Carrier Bureau

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<sup>1</sup> See 47 C.F.R. § 1.46(a).