



**The Association For The Study Of Afro-American Life And History, Inc.**  
**Carter G. Woodson, Founder, September 9, 1915**

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April 25, 1996

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APR 25 1996

The Honorable Reed E. Hundt  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, NW, Room 814  
Washington, DC 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Re: In the Matter of CC Docket No. 96-61  
Policy and Rules Concerning the Interstate, Interexchange Marketplace  
Implementation of Section 254(g) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended

Dear Chairman Hundt:

I am writing regarding the Mandatory Detariffing Proceeding before the Commission. The Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History is comprised of scholars across the country who teach, write, and otherwise communicate, on the subject of Black History. Most of the work of our members is done at our homes or at our offices located on college campuses. We have come to appreciate the importance of telecommunication in our labors. We also have come to understand the impact of competition on the cost of using long distance service.

We were strong supporters of the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 in the belief that relief was at hand. If we are to have relief, we must have lower prices now. Low prices will come only when there is real competition in the market place. At present, we do not yet have real competition; and we won't have it until the Regional Bell Operating Companies (RBOCs) are actually in the long distance market place. Also, the RBOCs will have to be in the market for a period of time to gain the type of market share that will lead to real competition.

We are not economists, but unless you permit the RBOCs into the market on a detariffed basis right away, you should not detariff the long distance companies. We have been buffeted by long distance company marketing and slamming for far too long. The consumer needs to be able to know, from the tariffs filed with the FCC what the real changes are in order to believe

Bettye J. Gardner  
President

Edward Beasley  
Vice President

Robert C. Hayden  
Secretary

William H. Simons  
Acting Treasurer

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The Honorable Reed E. Hundt

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"real" competition exists. After that happens, we agree, you should have mandatory detariffing for all market participant, new and old.

Thanks very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Betty Gardner".

Ms. Betty Gardner  
President