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Before the  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, DC 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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

GTE's REPLY COMMENTS

GTE Service Corporation and its affiliated  
domestic telephone operating companies

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## SUMMARY

The phased schedule proposed by GTE is realistic and reasonable. Appropriate modifications can be made accelerating that schedule if there are unanticipated favorable developments.

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Telephone Number Portability ) CC Docket No. 95-116

**GTE's REPLY COMMENTS**

GTE Service Corporation and its affiliated domestic telephone operating companies ("GTE"),<sup>1</sup> in support of its Request for Adjustment of Wireline Deadlines ("Request") filed March 2, 1998, and continuing to address the consequences of failure of an important industry vendor, Perot Systems Corporation ("Perot"), to carry out its contractual commitments, responds to parties that raised questions about GTE's Request for a realignment of deadlines in the Southeast, West Coast, and Western regions, as follows.

**BACKGROUND**

1. In paragraph 85 of the First Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in this CC Docket No. 95-116 ("D.95-116"), 11 FCC 2d 8352, 8397 (1996), the Commission "delegate[d] to the Chief, Common Carrier Bureau, the authority to waive or stay any of the dates in the implementation schedule, as the Chief

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<sup>1</sup> The GTE domestic telephone operating companies include: GTE Alaska, Incorporated, GTE Arkansas Incorporated, GTE California Incorporated, GTE Florida Incorporated, GTE Hawaiian Telephone Company Incorporated, The Micronesian Telecommunications Corporation, GTE Midwest Incorporated, GTE North Incorporated, GTE Northwest Incorporated, GTE South Incorporated, GTE Southwest Incorporated, Contel of Minnesota, Inc., and Contel of the South, Inc.

determines is necessary to ensure the efficient development of number portability, for a period not to exceed 9 months (i.e., no later than September 30, 1999)." To comply with Paragraph 85 the following criteria must be satisfied:

A carrier seeking such relief must demonstrate through substantial, credible evidence the basis for its contention that it is unable to comply with our deployment schedule. Such requests must set forth: (1) the facts that demonstrate why the carrier is unable to meet our deployment schedule; (2) a detailed explanation of the activities that the carrier has undertaken to meet the implementation schedule prior to requesting an extension of time; (3) an identification of the particular switches for which the extension is requested; (4) the time within which the carrier will complete deployment in the affected switches; and (5) a proposed schedule with milestones for meeting the deployment date.

2. Issued in D.95-116 on January 24, 1998, was an Order by the Chief, Network Services Division.<sup>2</sup> This, the *January Order*, reflected the recommendations of North America Numbering Council ("NANC") and said the Bureau "accept[s] NANC's recommendation and will allow affected carriers in the Southeast, West Coast, and Western regions until March 1, 1998 to file any necessary requests for waiver of the Commission's rules requiring implementation of permanent local number portability in the top 100 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs)."

#### DISCUSSION

I. **The submissions of AT&T and MCI misunderstand and misinterpret GTE's Request, which is not inconsistent with statements made by GTE elsewhere and does not represent an unwarranted extension of time required to perform all the important responsibilities associated with implementation of LNP.**

1. Submissions of AT&T and MCI give the mistaken impression that GTE is making requests that are extreme or unreasonable or in conflict with those made before

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<sup>2</sup> D.95-116, Order by the Chief, Network Services Division, 1998 FCC LEXIS 328 (rel. January 28, 1998) (the "*January Order*").

the California LNP Task Force. This is most emphatically not the case. GTE is merely asking the Commission – in accordance with standards spelled out by the Commission (quoted *supra*) to deal with just such circumstances – for adjustment of its LNP implementation schedule to reflect all aspects of Perot's failure to meet its responsibilities as LNP Administrator for the above-referenced regions.

2. It should be stressed that GTE's proposal does not entail a change in end date performance, which is still scheduled for December 31, 1998. Nor does it entail a slip in the key scheduled date of May 11 for intercompany testing once the NPAC goes "live." GTE stands ready to test with any carrier as originally planned by May 11. Further, if it emerges that the NPAC goes "live" sooner than the scheduled May 11 date, GTE is willing to test sooner.

3. As for disharmony alleged by AT&T (at 8 n. 15) between GTE's Request and data submitted to the California LNP Task Force, this does not exist. The two statements were made at different moments in time when a critical event interposed itself between them: Perot's failure to perform. GTE's proposed schedules offered in California -- documents that were clearly marked "for preliminary purposes only and ... subject to change" -- were submitted to the California LNP Task Force November 20, 1997 for the Phase I dates; and January 13, 1998 for the Phase II dates. These schedules could not have taken account of the Perot failure that was not announced till February 1998.

4. Moreover, AT&T would have the Commission believe that GTE proposed far shorter implementation periods to the California LNP Task Force than in its Request. This is simply not true. AT&T has taken one portion of the schedules and -- without any

consideration for the changes in underlying assumptions -- incorrectly compared the data to what is set out in the Request.

5. For example, in the report to the California LNP Task Force, GTE had proposed a sixty day period for intercompany testing followed by a 43 day implementation period. Thus, the interval from the time of having a "live" NPAC to completion of Phase I implementation would have been 103 days. The Request proposes a thirty day period for intercompany testing and a fifty-nine day implementation period for Phase I, for a total of 89 days from "live" NPAC to completion of Phase I. Thus, in effect, GTE's Request reduces the time from "live" NPAC to completion of Phase I implementation by two full weeks.

6. The Request simply proposes, in light of the Perot failure, to make sensible adjustments to the affected Phases of LNP implementation based on what has been learned by actual experience and observation. AT&T characterizes GTE's proposed implementation schedule as unreasonably long; and even (at 8) insists fourteen days are all that is needed to implement Phase I after carriers have completed intercompany testing.

7. AT&T may be able to complete its Phase I implementation within its proposed schedule. A careful inspection of AT&T's waiver request reveals that in the Los Angeles MSA, AT&T has only five switches in which LNP must be implemented. A simple calculation shows that AT&T would have under its proposal approximately three days per switch to implement LNP. In contrast, GTE has 66 switches in the same MSA. Under AT&T's proposed fourteen-day limit, GTE would have to implement more than four switches per day. Even under GTE's more reasonable proposal, it would have to implement LNP at approximately one switch per day. Indeed, if GTE were granted the

same time per switch that AT&T will enjoy under its proposal, GTE would have an implementation period of not 60 days but six months. Clearly, AT&T's fourteen day implementation, while appropriate for AT&T, is not appropriate for GTE. This is not surprising since GTE is much more familiar with GTE's needs and constraints. GTE's proposed schedule best represents the time it will take GTE to implement LNP in its network while maintaining reliability.

8. MCI presumes to lecture GTE at length (at 12-18) on performance of its LNP responsibilities.<sup>3</sup> The LNP program, MCI (at 15) insists, "is no different than what was necessary to roll-out GTE's ... caller ID services." But LNP is not a controlled roll-out as in the case of caller ID. To be prepared to implement LNP, GTE must anticipate and respond to shifts and changes on the part of other service partners. MCI's characterization of LNP implementation as similar to the caller ID roll-out ignores the realities of the LNP process, for LNP implementation is inherently a more complex and unpredictable process than one where all elements are under the control of GTE.

9. The timing and location of LNP roll-out is not being carried out to suit GTE but to comply with a governmental mandate. Thus, such key elements as switch selection and volume determination are decided on outside GTE. In contrast, in the

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<sup>3</sup> MCI (at 15) takes issue with GTE's comment that there could be a "flood of new signaling messages appearing virtually overnight," and suggests GTE has not planned properly for LNP. There is no basis for such a gratuitous swipe. GTE has properly sized the capacity of its SS7 facilities based on its needs and the needs of others that were made known to GTE. What MCI ignores and the Commission must not, particularly during the implementation of Phase I, is that failures in one part of the network can result in large unanticipated volumes of messages defaulting to network locations that were never planned to handle such volumes. Once Phase I is accomplished, many of these concerns will be reduced in future Phases. But it would be reckless and irresponsible to dismiss such concerns at this stage.

case of caller ID roll-out, GTE was able to deploy the service in a limited and controlled switch environment. This allowed correction of problems identified at any stage of the process before going on to the next stage. Moreover, should LNP implementation result in network outages, this could reflect most unfairly on GTE even if the fault lies with other carriers. While MCI and various new entrants are pressing the Commission to proceed with LNP implementation at all speed, they themselves have shown little interest in rigorously testing network systems prior to implementation.

10. A further difficulty that GTE could not have anticipated – which contributes to a need for rescheduling – is the surprising lack of interest shown by nearly all other carriers in intercompany testing with GTE. GTE has many times in speaking to industry teams stressed its wish to test LNP operations with Interexchange Carriers (“IXCs”), Competitive Local Exchange Carriers (“CLECs”) and others. Few carriers have volunteered to engage in this testing. And indeed MCI is one of those carriers that have displayed no apparent interest in mutual testing with GTE.

11. GTE's insistence on systematic testing is entirely appropriate given the risks that could be involved absent such testing. This insistence is not a sign of inadequate preparation but rather of the level of caution that is justified when massive changes are proposed in the nation's telecommunications system.

**II. GTE will agree to modify the performance schedule to reflect favorable developments as they occur.**

1. GTE is willing to make appropriate modifications in the schedule it proposes if and when favorable developments occur. As suggested *supra*, if the long-scheduled May 11 date for NPAC availability is improved, GTE would commence this testing earlier. Similarly, GTE will complete whatever intercompany testing prior to that

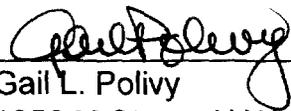
date proves to be practical. A clear example of GTE's willingness to expedite LNP implementation can be seen in the events that have occurred in the Houston MSA implementation. While the implementation date for the MSA was March 31, 1998, GTE was able to complete testing sooner and will be implementing LNP approximately two weeks prior to the due date.

2. GTE respectfully suggests the schedule recognized by the Commission should be realistic and achievable. The changes recommended by GTE would be both, while making due allowance for all appropriate testing measures. Because of the extraordinary requirements associated with its unusually numerous switches, because other carriers have not been quick to volunteer for testing with GTE, and because the testing process is a critical concern, given the serious potential implications of any failure, the August 13 deadline for Phase I LNP implementation is mandatory for GTE.

Respectfully submitted,

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March 17, 1998

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## Certificate of Service

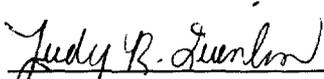
I, Judy R. Quinlan, hereby certify that copies of the foregoing "GTE's Reply Comments" have been mailed by first class United States mail, postage prepaid, on March 17, 1998 to the parties listed below:

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