

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

**RECEIVED**

**SEP 18 1998**

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

In the Matter of )  
)  
Inquiry Concerning the Deployment of )  
Advanced Telecommunications )  
Capability to All Americans in a Reasonable )  
and Timely Fashion, and Possible Steps )  
To Accelerate Such Deployment )  
Pursuant to Section 706 of the )  
Telecommunications Act of 1996 )

CC Docket No. 98-146

**REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF TIME OF THE  
PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION**

The Personal Communications Industry Association ("PCIA")<sup>1</sup> hereby requests a 21-day extension of the time for filing reply comments in the above-captioned proceeding.<sup>2</sup> As

<sup>1</sup> PCIA is an international trade association that represents the interests of the commercial and private mobile radio service communications industries and the fixed broadband wireless industry. PCIA's Federation of Councils includes: the Paging and Messaging Alliance, the Broadband PCS Alliance, the Site Owners and Managers Association, the Association of Wireless Communications Engineers and Technicians, the Private Systems Users Alliance, the Mobile Wireless Communications Alliance, and the Wireless Broadband Alliance. As the FCC-appointed frequency coordinator for the 450-512 MHz bands in the Business Radio Service, the 800 MHz and 900 MHz Business Pools, the 800 MHz General Category frequencies for Business Eligibles and conventional SMR systems, and the 929 MHz paging frequencies, PCIA represents and serves the interests of tens of thousands of FCC licensees.

<sup>2</sup> *Inquiry Concerning the Deployment of Advanced Telecommunications Capability to All Americans in a Reasonable and Timely Fashion, and Possible Steps to Accelerate Such Deployment Pursuant to Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996*, CC Docket No. 98-146, FCC 98-187 (rel. Aug. 7, 1998) (Notice of Inquiry) ("*NOI*"). In a Public Notice released August 12, 1998, the Commission extended by one week the date for filing opening comments in this proceeding. The extension was granted because of the proximity of the original comment date to a holiday. The Commission did not extend the reply comment date. The same public notice also extended the date for the submission of comments and reply comments responding to the Commission's companion Notice of Proposed Rule Making, *Deployment of Wireline*

(Continued...)

No. of Copies rec'd  
List A B C D E

*24*

discussed below, the above-captioned Notice of Inquiry (“*NOI*”) raises a broad array of issues that affect virtually all participants in the telecommunications industry. Comments from members of nearly all industry sectors have been filed and, based on PCIA’s initial review of these submissions, most are lengthy and cover numerous issues. Reply comments are currently due in slightly over three weeks, which is an insufficient time to allow affected entities to review the record and compile worthwhile and informative replies. PCIA respectfully submits that an extension of the reply comment date is warranted and will serve the public interest by ensuring that the utility of the record generated in this proceeding is maximized.

Briefly by way of background, the Commission adopted the *NOI* to begin the process of implementing Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.<sup>3</sup> Section 706 directs the Commission to foster “the deployment on a reasonable and timely basis of advanced telecommunications capability to all Americans.” The statute mandates that, within 30 months after the date of enactment of the 1996 Act, the Commission must initiate a notice of inquiry exploring the availability of advanced telecommunications capability to all Americans. The inquiry must be completed within 180 days. If the Commission finds that advanced

---

(...Continued)

*Services Offering Advanced Telecommunications Capability*, FCC 98-188 (rel. Aug. 7, 1998) (combining dockets CC Docket Nos. 98-147, 98-11, 98-26, 98-32, 98-78, and CCB/CPD No. 98-15, RM 9244). The comment period in that proceeding was extended from September 21 to September 25, and the reply comment period was extended from October 13 to October 16, again due to the proximity of the original comment dates to holidays. See Public Notice, DA 98-1624, “Common Carrier Bureau Establishes Revised Pleading Cycle for Comments in Section 706 Notice of Inquiry, FCC 98-187, and Deployment of Advanced Telecommunications Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 98-188,” (rel. Aug. 12, 1998).

<sup>3</sup> Pub.L. 104-104, title VII, § 706, Feb. 8, 1996, 110 Stat. 153, reproduced in the notes under 47 U.S.C. § 157.

telecommunications capability is not being deployed in a reasonable and timely fashion, it must “take immediate action to accelerate deployment of such capability by removing barriers to infrastructure investment and by promoting competition in the telecommunications market.”

In the *NOI*, the Commission seeks comment on a broad range of questions designed to permit an assessment of the extent to which the mandate of Section 706 is being met. Among other things, the *NOI* asks commenters to discuss: (1) how the statutory terms contained in Section 706 should be defined, including specifically, which facilities and services fall within the purview of “advanced telecommunications capability;” (2) the extent to which various industry segments are currently offering or have plans in the future to provide advanced telecommunications capability; (3) the demand for advanced telecommunications capability; (4) barriers to the effective provision of advanced telecommunications capability; and (5) suggested means for facilitating the removal of barriers to effective deployment of advanced telecommunications capability or otherwise ensuring that advanced telecommunications capabilities are provided as envisioned by Congress.

As the foregoing list demonstrates, the *NOI* raises a number of issues that are extremely important to every segment of the telecommunications industry. Indeed, members of virtually all industry sectors filed extensive comments in response to the *NOI*. By PCIA’s count, over 70 comments are currently included in the docket file, and more are being added each day. In view of the significance of this proceeding and the number of participants, the existing reply comment deadline, *i.e.*, October 8, 1998, is simply insufficient to permit a thorough review of the opening comments and compilation of meaningful replies.

For these reasons, PCIA respectfully requests a 21-day extension of the reply comment period. In accordance with this request, reply comments would be due October 29, 1998, as

opposed to the current due date of October 8, 1998. PCIA submits that grant of this extension will serve the public interest by ensuring that the Commission has a full and accurate record on which to proceed.

PCIA recognizes that the Commission is under a statutory deadline to complete its inquiry in this matter within 180 days. Grant of this extension request should not, however, jeopardize the Commission's ability to conclude its inquiry in a timely fashion. The Commission staff can begin review of the opening comments at any time. Instead of being rushed, interested parties will be able to file reply comments that will be more helpful to the Commission in its evaluation of this proceeding. The benefits of a full and well-reasoned record should outweigh the effect of the delay in the receipt of reply comments. Accordingly, grant of this request will further the interest in permitting as full a discussion of the issues raised by Congress's Section 706 mandate as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

By: Mary McDermott

Mary McDermott  
Chief of Staff and Senior Vice President  
Government Relations

Mark J. Golden  
Senior Vice President – Industry Affairs

Cynthia S. Thomas  
Director, Regulatory Affairs

PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY  
ASSOCIATION

500 Montgomery Street, Suite 700  
Alexandria, VA 22314

(703) 739-0300

September 18, 1998