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

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In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Petition of the Texas Public Utilities	)	
Commission for Delegation of Additional	)	File No. NSD L-99-55
Authority to Implement Number Conservation	)	
Measures	)	
	)	
Implementation of the Local Competition	)	CC Docket No. 96-98
Provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996	)	

COMMENTS OF SBC COMMUNICATIONS INC.

As one of the largest providers of wireline and wireless services in the State of Texas, SBC Communications Inc. ("SBC") is familiar with consumer concerns regarding area code relief. SBC appreciates and shares the concerns expressed by the Public Utilities Commission of Texas ("PUCT") regarding the unpopular task of choosing between area code relief plans that cause substantial inconvenience and harm to Texas consumers.<sup>1</sup> For this reason, SBC has strongly supported and continues to support national numbering conservation policies that are designed to address the underlying drivers of the rapid area code exhaust.<sup>2</sup> SBC has encouraged the Commission in adopting a new comprehensive national numbering policy that includes deploying thousands block number pooling in the top 100 metropolitan statistical areas ("MSAs") in a limited, focused, and cost-effective manner, and to modify its area code relief policies to minimize the disruption and inconvenience to customers caused by area code relief.

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<sup>1</sup> Petition of the Public Utility Commission of Texas for Expedited Decision for Delegation of Authority to Implement number Conservation Measures, filed July 2, 1999, NSD File No. L-99-55; Public Notice, DA 99-1380, released July 14, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> See, Comments of SBC Communications Inc, filed July 30, 1999 in the Matter of Numbering Resource Optimization, CC Docket No. 99-200.

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Comments of SBC Communications Inc.  
File No. NSD L-99-55, CC Docket No. 96-98  
August 16, 1999

## **I. Relief Sought by PUCT.**

The PUCT seeks authority to implement the following number conservation measures in Texas: (1) thousands block number pooling; (2) unassigned number porting (“UNP”); (3) reclamation of unused NXX codes and thousand number blocks and; (4) the requirement of all codeholders to provide to the PUCT utilization and forecast information. SBC believes the PUCT already has the authority to order the provisioning of utilization and forecast data. Moreover, it has in the past exercised this authority to order the industry to provide it with this type of data on specific NPAs.

Similarly, SBC does not endorse the PUCT’s request for authority to reclaim unused NXX codes. The North American Numbering Plan Administration (“NANPA”) already has this authority and has simply failed to effectively exercise it. State commissions should work with NANPA to accomplish NXX code reclamation in accordance with the established industry guidelines.

With regard to the PUCT’s remaining requests, SBC does not support the PUCT’s request for authority to implement thousands block number pooling trials or to order UNP. As SBC previously explained in Reply Comments regarding a similar petition filed by the California Public Utilities Commission,<sup>3</sup> state-ordered thousands block number pooling trials would provide little benefit, and would impose substantial costs, at this time. In any event, thousands block number pooling trials would likely be constrained by available capacity in the STP architecture and would be in place such a brief period of time before the national thousand-block number pooling standard (“TBNP”) is deployed, that they would not provide any appreciable benefit to the state commissions.

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<sup>3</sup> See, Reply Comments of SBC Communications Inc. filed June 28, 1999 in the Matter of the Petition of the California Public Service Commission and the People of the State of California for Delegation of Additional Authority Pertaining to Area Code Relief and to NXX Code Conservation Measures, NSD File No.L-98-136.

UNP would threaten the viability of the existing number portability infrastructure and have a substantial negative impact on numbering administration principles. UNP further would increase the number of contaminated blocks, rendering these blocks unavailable for pools associated with the deployment of a national TBNP. It would also hinder any deployment of sequential number assignments. An additional disadvantage of UNP is that its implementation will adversely effect the abilities of companies to accurately forecast their numbering requirements because of uncertainty related to how and with what frequency service providers will request unassigned numbers. Moreover, UNP adoption would potentially cause inaccuracies in utilization.

Service providers that support UNP do so for competitive reasons, in order to burden their competitors, rather than for any espoused objective of number optimization. In this regard, UNP would place certain service providers in the position of again being number administrators, subject to frivolous complaints before state commissions. UNP should not be authorized as a voluntary or mandatory measure because it will not provide any meaningful number optimization benefit.

Authority which would allow the PUCT to implement thousands block number pooling and UNP is unwarranted. The Commission will address the concerns raised by the PUCT with regard to numbering administration and allocation shortly in its *Numbering Resource Optimization* proceeding.

## **II. Interim Number Conservation**

However, SBC does encourage the Commission to quickly implement an interim number optimization measure to provide relief to the states until such time as a sound and cost effective numbering policy can be deployed. To serve this purpose, it recommends that states be permitted a waiver of 10-digit dialing with overlays. The PUCT has openly stated that preserving 7-digit local dialing is an important objective, particularly in rural areas. Therefore, there is every reason to assume that a temporary waiver of the 10-digit dialing requirement for

new overlays would be embraced by the state commissions. Moreover, since the 10-digit dialing with overlays policy was adopted for dialing parity reasons, the implementation of number portability in the top 100 MSAs and in locations where a bona-fide request has been processed, has essentially eliminated the need for this requirement. SBC stresses that it views this measure as temporary in nature until the Commission adopts a new comprehensive national numbering policy and structure.

Additionally, the Commission should be allowed to require mandatory sequential number assignment (“SNA”) to protect number blocks from contamination.<sup>4</sup> SNA is a means for maximizing the number of uncontaminated thousands blocks available for number pools once TBNP is implemented. SNA will no longer be required once this policy is achieved.

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<sup>4</sup> SNA does not require “sequential” number assignment between or within thousand blocks.

### III. Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, the Commission should not grant all of the authority sought by the PUCT. However, it should adopt the temporary measures proposed by SBC which would allow the states to provide NPA relief as required and give service providers access to numbering resources, without disruption to customer service. By doing so, the current needs of the states would be met and time afforded to develop and implement a new comprehensive national numbering policy and structure.

Respectfully submitted,

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August 16, 1999

## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Katie Turner, do hereby certify that copies of the "Comments of SBC Communications Inc." in File No. NSD-L-99-55, CC Docket No. 96-98 were served by first class United States Mail, postage prepaid, upon the parties appearing on the attached service list this 16<sup>th</sup> day of August, 1999.

/s/ Katie Turner

August 16, 1999

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