

**BEFORE THE
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Numbering Resource Optimization)	CC Docket No. 99-200
)	
Connecticut Department of Public)	RM No. 9528
Utility Control Petition for Rulemaking)	
to Amend the Commission’s Rule)	
Prohibiting Technology-Specific or)	
Service-Specific Area Code Overlays)	
)	
Massachusetts Department of)	NSD File L-99-17
Telecommunications and Energy)	
Petition for Waiver to Implement a)	
Technology-Specific Overlay in the)	
506, 617, 781, and 978 Area Codes)	
)	
California Public Utilities Commission)	NSD File L-99-36
and the People of the State of California)	
Petition for Waiver to Implement a)	
Technology-Specific or)	
Service Specific Area Code)	

**REPLY COMMENTS on NUMBERING RESOURCE OPTIMIZATION on behalf of
the PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (“the PaPUC”) submits these reply comments in response to the comments filed by various parties to the Commission’s Numbering Resource Optimization Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (“NPRM”).

Some of the commenters were concerned about the states’ requests for additional delegation of authority to implement various number conservation

measures to address numbering problems existing in their jurisdictions. The commenters raised concerns that granting the requests of the states would lead to “a hodge-podge of local, parochial and political state decisions.” The commenters went on to indicate that granting authority to 50 different state commissions is counter-intuitive to effective number conservation and would ultimately lead to the demise of the national architecture for number administration of the NANP envisioned by the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

In response, the PaPUC asserts that state commissions were compelled to request additional authority from the Commission to implement various number conservation measure only because, up until now, the industry and the Commission had refused to address the numbering dilemmas that had been plaguing the states. For some time now, states have been requesting the industry, which developed the guidelines for administration of NANP numbering resources, to take the initiative and revise the guidelines so that the effective administration of numbers can be ensured and the telephone number shortage crisis curtailed. Moreover, the states sought means to implement conservation measures that would prolong the life of NPAs within their respective jurisdictions. Incredibly, the industry’s response has been that the telephone number shortage is a consequence of the states reluctance to implement timely area code relief -- the industry apparently believes that the states should forego seeking number conservation

measures, await the Commission's implementation of a national plan, and in the meantime, simply introduce new area codes.

However, the cycle of carriers depleting NXX codes in any given NPA and then running to the state commission requesting a new NPA so that the carriers can obtain more NXX codes is just the dilemma that many states, including Pennsylvania, are trying to avoid. This industry mentality has led to the rapid proliferation of new area codes in a short period of time. For example, since 1993, Pennsylvania has introduced five new area codes and is in the process of introducing a sixth. Indeed, the 724 and 412 NPAs in western Pennsylvania have been declared to be in jeopardy by the NANPA less than two years after the PaPUC implemented area code relief in that region. The NANPA, on behalf of the industry, filed a NPA Relief Plan with the PaPUC advising us that based upon industry demand projections, NPA relief is necessary and recommended that an all-services multiple overlay be implemented for the entire geographic region encompassed by the 412 and 724 NPAs, which would introduce a third area code in this region.

States can not continue to sit back and let their constituents suffer because of the industry's refusal to amend its practices and the Commission's reluctance to implement any type of national number conservation policy. The states recognized that the inefficient way in which numbers are allocated was one of the primary causes of premature exhaust of new NPAs within their jurisdiction and

would ultimately lead to the premature demise of the NANP as well.

Consequently, the states, believing they were in a better position to administer numbering resources, expressed the need for a greater role in the administration and allocation of numbers as well as requesting from the Commission additional authority to implement various conservation measures responsive to their specific concerns.

The PaPUC believes, however, that the NANPA should continue to function as the national code administrator as envisioned and directed by the Commission as long as it is given the appropriate authority to effectively administer such a limited and important public resource as the NANP numbers. Nevertheless, in the likelihood that the NANPA hesitates to assume this role, state commissions should be delegated authority to assume numbering administration duties. Moreover, the PaPUC urges the Commission to implement a national number conservation policy that states can utilize to address their numbering concerns.

The PaPUC is adamant in its request that the Commission mandate that the NANC and the industry revise the industry guidelines so that they are more prescriptive and empower the NANPA to administer the NANP numbers as a valuable public resource. Additionally, the PaPUC also strongly encourages the Commission to implement a national 1000-block number pooling arrangement that would lead to the more efficient utilization of NANP numbering resources and

allow states to “opt in” for those regions in their jurisdiction where such a proposal would prolong the life of the NPA.

In conclusion, the PaPUC thanks the Commission for an opportunity to express its concerns and requests that the Commission implement these number optimization measures that go to the heart of the numbering crisis in an expeditious manner.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: August 30, 1999

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Certificate of Service

I, David E. Screven, hereby certify that I have this 30th day of August, 1999, filed an electronic copy of the Comment on Numbering Resource Optimization on behalf of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission upon the Secretary of the Federal Communications Commission and the other persons listed below by first class mail:

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