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

In the Matter of)
)
UNITED STATES TELEPHONE)
ASSOCIATION PETITION FOR)
RULEMAKING – 2000 BIENNIAL)
REGULATORY REVIEW)

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

COMMENTS OF CINCINNATI BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY

Cincinnati Bell Telephone Company (“CBT”), an independent, mid-size local exchange carrier submits these comments in response to the Commission’s October 14, 1999 Public Notice requesting comment on the Petition for Rulemaking filed by the United States Telephone Association (“USTA”).¹ These comments wholeheartedly support USTA’s request for a comprehensive review of all regulatory rules pursuant to Section 11 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 as well as USTA’s recommendations concerning the rules that should be eliminated or modified as no longer in the public interest.

As the USTA petition indicates, the 1998 Biennial Review conducted by the Commission used a piecemeal approach rather than the comprehensive, “attic to basement” review contemplated by the 1996 Act. If, for some reason, the dictates of the 1996 Act are not eminently clear that a comprehensive review is required, the USTA petition clearly delineates the benefits of undertaking a comprehensive review.² CBT submits that these benefits alone justify a comprehensive approach rather than the piecemeal approach of the 1998 review.

¹ *United States Telephone Association Petition for Rulemaking – 2000 Biennial Regulatory Review* (“USTA Petition”), filed August 11, 1999, established as RM 9707 pursuant to *Public Notice*, Report No. 2364 released October 14, 1999.

² Petition at pages 6-8.

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CBT also concurs with USTA that the increasing competition in the telecommunications industry, and the convergence within the industry, makes the 2000 Biennial Review crucial. Most of the rules that were modified or eliminated as a result of the 1998 review were administrative in nature and unrelated to the development of competition. In its 2000 review the Commission must, as the 1996 Act directs, assess the impact of competition on its rules. The USTA Petition elaborates on the convergence in the industry and the resulting competition,³ which the Commission itself has acknowledged in recent proceedings.⁴ This competition necessitates a thorough review which weighs whether each of the Commission's rules are necessary in the public interest as the result of meaningful economic competition between providers of such services.

CBT urges the Commission to use the USTA Biennial Review Petition as a model for its 2000 Biennial Review which should be a comprehensive review of all of its rules.

Respectfully submitted,

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November 15, 1999

³ Petition at pages 8-18.

⁴ See, for example, *Third Report and Order in the Matter of Implementation of the Local Competition Provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996*, CC Docket No. 96-98, FCC 99-238, released November 5, 1999 at para. 307.