RECEIVED
APR 17 2000
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

April 17, 2000

Magalie Roman Salas
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW, Room TW-B-204
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Reply Comments on CC Docket Nos. 94-1, 96-45, 96-262, & 99-249/ Coalition for Affordable Local and Long Distance Services (CALLS) Modified Proposal

Dear Secretary Roman Salas:

The undersigned organizations, representing a wide array of national, state and local constituencies (see Attachment A), support the proposal being considered by the Federal Communications Commission – known as the modified CALLS plan – that will lower telephone rates and promote universal service.

The modified CALLS plan will result in one of the largest one-time telephone rate decreases in history and will ensure that all Americans have access to telephone services at affordable prices. We join with the Alliance for Public Technology, the Communications Workers of America, and the National Association of Development Organizations, National Consumers League, National Council of Senior Citizens and other leading advocacy organizations that have applauded the modified CALLS plan.

The CALLS coalition members -- AT&T, Bell Atlantic, BellSouth, GTE, SBC and Sprint -- have listened to the concerns from the consumer community and expanded consumer benefits with the modified plan.

The modified CALLS plan will result in immediate consumer savings by doing the following:

- **Per minute access charges will be reduced by $2.1 billion immediately resulting in lower long distance bills for consumers.** In total over the life of this plan, per minute access rates will be cut in half compared to today's prices, meaning further savings when these reductions are passed on to consumers

- **Elimination of minimum usage charges for AT&T basic schedule long distance callers, and preservation of a no-minimum plan by Sprint.** AT&T and Sprint have made a commitment to the FCC and to consumer groups to make good on this promise. This will save millions of consumers who make very few, if any long distance calls up to $3 or more per month.

- **Elimination of the Presubscribed Interexchange Carrier Charge (PICC) resulting in immediate cash savings for consumers.** The residential PICC pass-through fee charged by long distance companies was scheduled to rise to approximately $2.00 on July 1, 2000. The modified CALLS plan eliminates the residential PICC-pass through fee entirely.

Like the original, the modified CALLS plan includes a phased increase in the SLC on primary or first lines. But the modified plan extends the phase in period and sets lower overall caps. For example, the cap for high-cost areas will be $6.50 rather than $7.00.

NATIONAL HISPANIC COUNCIL ON AGING
2713 Ontario Rd. N.W. ● Washington D.C. 20009
(202) 745-2521 (202) 265-1288 FAX (202) 745-2522 E-Mail: NHCoA@aol.com

In short, we believe that this new plan has something for everyone:

Access charge reductions will help reduce rates for high-volume long distance users, while low volume users benefit from a new commitment from AT&T and Sprint to scrap basic schedule minimum usage charges.

Elimination of the PICC will mean savings for all consumers.

Low-income consumers are protected as well. The Lifeline program will cover the new SLC and they will no longer have to pay the PICC. This is especially beneficial to people with disabilities, as are the low-volume provisions for basic service made by AT&T and Sprint.

We urge the Commission to adopt the revised CALLS proposal. CALLS is the right step towards lower telephone bills and access for all Americans. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Marta Sotomayor, President and CEO
National Hispanic Council on Aging

George Abbot
Alliance for Small Business Advocacy

Ira Schoenholtz, President
American Association of Business Persons with Disabilities

Andrew J. Imparato, President and CEO
American Association of People with Disabilities

Mark Phigler, President
Americans for Competitive Telecommunications

Don Rounds, President
The Consumer Alliance

Lora Weber, Executive Director
Consumers Alliance of the South East

Jim Conran
Consumers First

Guarione M. Diaz, President
Cuban American National Council

Cristina C. Caballero, President and CEO
Dialogue on Diversity

Florence Rice, President
Harlem Consumer Education Council

Barbara Olivas, President
Hispanic Education Foundation of the American GI Forum of the United States

Lorraine Cortes-Vazquez, President
Hispanic Federation

Theodore Debro, Jr., Deputy Director
Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity

Fred Fay, Moderator
Justice for All

Brent Wilkes, Executive Director
League of United Latin American Citizens

Patricia Hendel, President
National Association of Commissions for Women

Nancy J. Bloch, Executive Director
National Association of the Deaf (NAD)

Manuel Oliverez, President
National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives

Velma Montoya, PhD, President
National Council of Hispanic Women

Leroy Watson, Legislative Director
The National Grange

Kofi A. Boateng, Executive Director
National Puerto Rican Forum, Inc.

Dr. Garry A. Mendez, Jr.
The National Trust for the Development of African American Men

Claude L. Stout, Executive Director
Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc. (TDI)

Jordan Clark
United Homeowners Association

Cc: Chairman William E. Kennard
Commissioner Susan Ness
Commissioner Michael Powell
Commissioner Gloria Tristani
Commissioner Harold Furchtgott-Roth

PETITION
ATTACHMENT 'A'
STATEMENTS OF INTEREST

Alliance for Small Business Advocacy (ASBA) is an affiliation of small business owners, supporters, and groups that are committed to identifying and working on issues that have or will have a critical impact on small business growth. ASBA was formed as a result of the increasing awareness of the importance of small business to a healthy economy.

American Association of Business Persons with Disabilities, based in Irvine, CA, works on issues of concern for independent business owners with disabilities.

American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) serves the 49 million Americans with disabilities plus their families and friends. AAPD saw the need for one unifying membership organization to leverage the numbers of people with disabilities and their families and friends to access economic and other benefits to form an organization which will be a positive private-sector force to achieve the goal of full inclusion in American society. On July 25, 1995, some 550 individuals from all 50 states, representing America's 54 million people with disabilities gathered in Washington to help launch a new nonprofit organization, the American Association of People with Disabilities - AAPD. The new organization promises to bring about "the next step in the evolution of the disability rights movement" - economic clout and power through numbers - unity, leadership and impact.

Americans for Competitive Telecommunications, based in California, is an organization supporting the competitive environment in the American long-distance telecommunications industry.

The Consumer Alliance is a nonprofit research and advocacy organization with members in 21 states.

Consumer Alliance of the Southeast (CASE) is a regional coalition of consumers, community leaders, and small business owners with members in 12 states, from Texas to Florida.

Consumers First is a California-based statewide consumer education and advocacy organization. This broad-based grassroots association provides information to consumers, encourages participation in the governmental process and works with business and media to educate consumers and improve the marketplace.

The **Cuban American National Council** is a non-profit and tax exempt 501 (c) (3) organization. Independent, non-partisan, and governed by its own national board of directors, CANC delivers education, housing and economic development services through a network of related non-profit corporations, totaling a staff of 200 full-time employees.

Dialogue on Diversity Dialogue on Diversity, Inc., is a multi-cultural non-profit organization dedicated to the economic advancement of women from diverse cultural, ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds in the U.S. and around the world. Founded in 1990, Dialogue on Diversity promotes widespread adoption and deployment of technology to aid in entrepreneurship, global communications, environmental remediation, health care, and political

empowerment. Members include national and international public policy leaders, small business owners and community activists.

Harlem Consumer Education Council, Inc., is a consumer advocacy, consumer education and training organization based in New York City, New York. The organization is involved in telecommunications issues, particularly as they affect low income and minority consumers. Among its activities is sponsorship of "Harlem Consumer Awareness Day," a joint conference with state and federal agencies.

Hispanic Education Foundation of the American GI Forum of the United States, is a nonprofit, tax-exempt that advocates on consumers.

The Hispanic Federation (HF), is a membership organization of Latino health and human services agencies serving Hispanics in the northeast. The Hispanic Federation's mission is to build and strengthen community-based organizations which provide Latinos with a host of services, including immigration services, economic development, job training, and housing.

League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) has approximately 115,000 members throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. LULAC is the largest and oldest Hispanic Organization in the United States. LULAC advances the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, health and civil rights of Hispanic Americans through community-based programs operating at more than 600 LULAC councils nationwide. The organization involves and serves all Hispanic nationality groups.

The Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity was established in 1965 to serve as Jefferson County's Community Action Agency. The agency strives to meet the needs of low-income citizens at the community level. Among its goals are the elimination of poverty at its roots and the empowerment of people through policy formation and program participation.

Justice For All is a disability rights organization formed to defend and advance disability rights and programs in Congress. One JFA goal is to work with national and state organizations of people with disabilities to get the word from Washington D.C. out to the grassroots.

National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW) represents local commissions established to promote the interests of women in cultural, social, and economic fields. NACW supports policies and programs that empower women to make informed choices about all aspects of their lives. NACW has been active in the debate on telecommunications reform, supporting legislative and regulatory initiatives to encourage competition, thereby creating new options and services for women as consumers and in their businesses.

National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives (NAHFE) a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(6) non-partisan national organization, promotes career opportunities for qualified Hispanic Americans in the Federal GS/GM-13/15 grade levels and in the Senior Executive Service policy-making positions. Hispanic Americans are the most under-represented segment of the United States population within employment grade levels in the Federal government.

National Association of the Deaf (NAD) is the oldest (founded in 1880) and largest organization representing people with disabilities in the United States. The NAD safeguards the accessibility and civil rights of 28 million deaf and hard of hearing Americans in a variety of areas including education, employment, health care and social services, and telecommunications.

A private, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, NAD is a dynamic federation of 51 state association affiliates, sponsoring and organizational affiliates, and direct members.

National Council of Hispanic Women, includes both individuals and organizations, such as universities and corporations, that are committed to empowering Hispanic women and giving them a greater role in American society. The main goal of the organization is to have a more direct representation for its members in policy making by establishing Hispanic women in positions of leadership in business and government.

National Hispanic Council on Aging is a membership organization that promotes the well being of Hispanic elderly. Members represent fields of administration, planning, direct services, research and education.

The National Grange is the nation's oldest (founded in 1867) national agricultural organization, with grassroots units established in 3,600 local communities in 37 states. Its 300,000 members provide service to agriculture and rural areas on a wide variety of issues, including economic development, education, family endeavors, and legislation designed to assure a strong and viable Rural America. It was formed in the years following the American Civil War to unite private citizens in improving the economic and social position of the nation's farm population. Over the past 130 years, it has evolved to include non-farm rural families and communities.

National Puerto Rican Forum, Inc.'s mission is to enhance the socio-economic conditions of the Latino population through programs, research, advocacy and direct services in education and economic development. Throughout its history, the Forum has created and implemented successful programs in economic development, employment, training and education. The Forum's pledge to advance the socio-economic conditions of underserved communities continues via direct services, advocacy and research.

The National Trust for the Development of African American Men is a national, nonprofit organization based in the Washington, D.C. area that addresses the development, needs and challenges of African Americans, especially males, in the areas of health, leadership, training, economic development, education, and crime prevention from an African American view of the world. The Trust operates programs throughout the Bell Atlantic region with a particular emphasis on technology training and making computers and on-line services accessible in low income and underserved communities.

Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc. (TDI) is a national non-profit advocacy organization established in 1968 to promote full visual access for deaf, hard-of-hearing and speech-impaired constituencies to entertainment, information and telecommunications offerings in America. TDI promotes full visual access to these offerings through consumer education and involvement, technical assistance and consulting, application of existing and emerging technologies, networking and collaboration, uniformity of standards and national policy development and advocacy.

United Homeowners Association (UHA) is a national, nonprofit, membership based organization that represents the interests of homeowners in Washington, D.C. UHA has an active communications advocacy program on behalf of its members. UHA has promoted the interests of homeowners in telecommunications to Congress, before the FCC and in the courts.