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State of Vermont
Public Service Board

February 22, 2001

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Magalie Roman Salas, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., SW
Suite TW-A325
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Vermont Public Service Board's Petition for Delegation of Additional Delegated Authority to Implement Number Conservation Measures; CC Docket Nos. 96-98, 99-200, NSD File No. L-01-272, DA No. 01-75

Dear Secretary Salas:

Enclosed for filing in the above matter please find one original and five copies of the Reply Comments of the Vermont Public Service Board. Kindly stamp one copy and return it to us in the enclosed stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely,

Michael H. Dworkin
Chairman

Enclosures

cc w/enc: Aaron Goldberger, Common Carrier Bureau, Network Service Division

No. of Copies rec'd 0+4
List A B C D E

Before the Common Carrier Bureau of the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington , D.C. 20554

In the Matter of Vermont's Petition for	)	CC Docket No. 99-200
Additional Delegated Authority to Implement	)	NSD File No. L-01-272
Number Conservation Measures	)	DA No. 01-73

VERMONT PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD'S REPLY COMMENTS IN SUPPORT OF ITS PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO IMPLEMENT NUMBER CONSERVATION MEASURES

The Vermont Public Service Board ("VTPSB") hereby files these comments in reply to comments to VTPSB's Petition for Delegation of Additional Authority to Implement Number Conservation Measures filed with the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") on November 28, 2000 ("Petition"). For the reasons set forth below, VTPSB urges the FCC to conclude that the opposing comments to VTPSB's Petition do not have merit. We continue to urge that the FCC grant VTPSB's Petition in its entirety and grant to the VTPSB the authority to implement interim mandatory thousands-block number pooling ("TNP") pusuant to Paragraph 170 of the FCC's *Report and Order*[1] in this proceeding, to apply on a state-wide basis.

The VTPSB believes that conservation measures can delay or prevent the need for new area codes throughout Vermont. It is important to Vermont consumers that the VTPSB be able to conserve numbers in the interim pending the FCC implementation of national conservation measures. This will prevent or delay the need for Vermont to undergo the disruption and expense which attends the introduction of new area codes.

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1. *In the Matter of Numbering Resource Optimization*, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, CC Docket No. 99-200, FCC 00-104 (March 20, 2000) ("*Report and Order*").

Commenters filing in opposition to VTPSB's request proffer arguments that have been consistently rejected by the FCC.[2] These comments suggest that the FCC should deny this Petition and similar petitions from other states so that number conservation may be developed at the national level, and because the petitions do not provide an adequate basis on which to grant the requested delegations of authority. The request by VTPSB in its Petition for interim authority is reasonable given the need the vulnerability of Vermont, as a rural state with a single area code, to premature number exhaust. Commenters have not addressed this factual situation, which is described more fully in the VTPSB Petition. While Vermont does not disagree that a national rollout of a uniform numbering policy would be optimal, we believe that the national implementation plan, which will first introduce TNP to states with cities on the list of top 100 MSAs, is unlikely to sufficiently protect Vermont consumers in the interim period. It is difficult to predict when rural states like Vermont, states that do not have a city in the top 100 MSAs, will be included in the national implementation plan. Until that unknown date arrives, Vermont customers risk premature area code exhaustion and the attendant costs and disruption. In addition, the VTPSB believes that TNP would be of particular benefit in the efficient allocation of numbering resources. In Vermont, many service areas contain far less than ten thousand subscriber lines. The implementation of TNP in Vermont and similar rural states with relatively small average numbers of subscriber lines per service area will allow these states to limit the inefficient allocation of numbers, and it will forestall unnecessary introduction of new area codes. These scarce area codes can then be utilized in more densely populated areas where they are more needed.

The Common Carrier Bureau must realistically assess the gravity of the rapid and, in some cases, unnecessary depletion of our scarce numbering resources. It should set forth a schedule for implementation of a national solution which provides for its implementation in rural states. In the interim, given the reasons set forth above and in its Petition, the VTPSB should be given the

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2. See Multi-State Delegation Orders, CC Docket Nos. 99-200 and 96-98, NSD File Nos. L-99-100 et al., at ¶ 2 (rel. July 20, 2000) (granting the Arizona, Colorado, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia and Washington Commissions authority to conduct interim thousands-block number pooling trials), and CC Docket Nos. 99-200 and 96-98, NSD File No. L-00-170 et al., at ¶ 2 (rel. February 14, 2001) (granting Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, and New Jersey Commissions authority to conduct interim thousands-block number pooling trials).

authority to employ number conservation measures rather than continue to face the risk of being forced to needlessly create a new area code and, thereby, waste millions of numbers of the rapidly depleting NANP. Therefore, the VTPSB urges the FCC to conclude that the comments filed in opposition to VTPSB's Petition lack merit and to expeditiously grant VTPSB's Petition in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted this 22nd day of February, 2001.

By: Michael H. Dworkin

Michael H. Dworkin
Chairman