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April 3, 2001

Magalie Salas, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: EX PARTE PRESENTATION
CC Docket No. 96-262

Dear Ms. Salas:

On April 2, 2001, Leon Kestenbaum and I, on behalf of Sprint Corporation, met with Sarah Whitesell of Commissioner Tristani's office to discuss the CLEC access issue in the above-referenced docket. Sprint argued that the appropriate benchmark for CLEC access charges is the rate of the ILEC in the same geographic market. Sprint urged that if the Commission decides not to adopt such a benchmark immediately, but instead adopts a transition to that level, the initial transition rate should be as close to the ILEC level as possible, and the transition period should be as short as possible. In that regard, Sprint endorsed the transition proposed by AT&T, starting with a rate of 1.2 cents per minute, and reaching the ILEC level within 1 year. Sprint emphasized that the cost of giving the CLECs a longer transition or starting the transition at a higher rate would come from the pockets of consumers who make long distance calls.

Sprint also addressed the issue of a special exception for rural carriers, stating that there was no economic justification for any such exception, but urging, if the Commission determines nonetheless to adopt such an exception, that it be carefully tailored to avoid unintended abuse of the exception. Sprint argued that if, for example, the definition of rural carrier depended in part on the number of access lines it serves, such definition should be applied at the holding company level so as to prevent urban CLECs from availing themselves of the "rural" exception simply by organizing multiple, separate subsidiaries.

This letter is being filed electronically.

Respectfully submitted,


Richard Juhnke

cc: Sarah Whitesell