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Congress of the United States of America  
House of Representatives

April 19, 2001

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Michigan

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Vernon J. Ehlers

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Mr. Michael Powell, Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Mr. Powell,

Recently, the Michigan Public Service Commission submitted a formal request asking the FCC to grant the Grand Rapids and Detroit Metropolitan Statistical Areas the ability to extend the life of existing and newly created area codes through 1,000 block number distribution and participation in the initial round of proposed national number pooling. I wish to express my support for the approval of MPSC's petition and I hope that this manner is handled expeditiously.

I am concerned over the alarming rate at which Michigan area codes are exhausting available numbers. Four area codes have been added in Michigan since 1994 with at least three more in need of relief. One of those area codes (616) is within my Congressional District and went through a geographical split in 1999. The (616) area code is again being reviewed for a subsequent geographical split or an overlay. The most optimistic projection is that it will need another split in six years.

The FCC's granting of the Michigan Public Services Commission's request to begin number conservation techniques will save Michigan businesses millions of dollars in unnecessary costs. Any area code solution that fails to encompass number conservation will cost businesses needed capital that could be better invested to expand and create new jobs.

Please consider my comments as ex parte communication and add them to the record of MPSC's petition. Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

Vernon J. Ehlers  
Member of Congress

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cc: The Honorable Jerry O. Kooiman