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August 31, 2001

Magalie Roman Salas
Secretary
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
CY-B402
Washington, D.C. 20554

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Re: CC Docket 01-194

Dear Secretary Salas and Commissioners:

It is my understanding that Southwestern Bell has filed an application with the Federal Communications Commission to provide long distance service in Missouri. As I am entrepreneur and businessman, I have seen the technological advancements that are available in other locations where competition drives the market. I believe that allowing Southwestern Bell to provide long distance service will be good for my business.

Southwestern Bell has evolved from a plain old telephone company to a full service voice, data and video telecommunications provider and as such should not be hampered by regulatory restricts that prevent them from providing services that customers want. Southwestern Bell is investing \$300 million in a new high-speed data network that will bring high-speed Internet access throughout Missouri. These types of advanced services are critical to the success of small businesses and the economic development of this region.

Your favorable ruling would provide customers with another choice. In my line of business, more choices have always led to better value and better service. I believe that the same principle would apply to the telecommunications industry.

Sincerely,

John Edwards
CEO and President

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