



STATE OF ARKANSAS
MIKE HUCKABEE
GOVERNOR

RECEIVED

SEP 18 2001

FCC MAIL ROOM

September 6, 2001

Ms. Magalie Roman Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, NW
CY-B402
Washington, DC 20544

RE: CC Docket No. 01-194 /

Dear Secretary Salas:

One of my top priorities as Governor of Arkansas has been to promote and develop 24/7 government. Arkansans can now buy their car tags online, as well as their fishing licenses. I recognize the value information technology can bring not only to government efficiency, but also to citizen convenience.

This recognition is why, as Governor of Arkansas, I would urge the Federal Communications Commission to strongly consider the merits of Southwestern Bell's application, and if you determine local competition to be present, to grant their request.

Not only will Southwestern Bell offering long distance service provide additional long distance competition in the state and lower rates, but importantly it will permit Southwestern Bell to carry data across LATA boundaries throughout the state. This is very important for a rural state. Currently, because of long distance restrictions, Southwestern Bell cannot carry a voice or data call from Pine Bluff to Little Rock. As a result, Pine Bluff lags the rest of the area for an internet point of presence as well as internet service providers. Southwestern Bell's entry into the long distance business will be a tremendous economic development tool, as well as a way to help bridge the digital divide.

I urge the Commission to favorably consider Southwestern Bell's application and to help me help Arkansas become a real player in the information age.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Mike Huckabee in black ink.
Mike Huckabee

No. of Copies rec'd 9
List ABCDE