

Tom Li
125 Haddon Road
New Hyde Park, NY 11040-1740

RECEIVED

2015 NOV -9 AM 9: 20

November 5, 2015

Idaho Public Utilities Commission
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0074

IDAHO PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION

Subject: Case No. GNR-T-15-06 – 208 Area Code

To Whom It May Concern:

As one of the people who commented on this proceeding earlier, I strongly urge the PUC to reconsider its decision to adopt an overlay for area code 208.

The PUC's decision to overlay area code 208 was made in spite of the fact that (1) the majority of public comments received during the proceeding supported the geographic split, and (2) contrary to my earlier recommendation, there was no attempt to gather more widespread feedback on this issue via public hearings and/or surveys. Already there have been people who have submitted comments asking the PUC to reconsider, which suggests that unlike many other places around the country, there exists a significant deal of dissatisfaction with the concept of an overlay in Idaho. As I mentioned in my earlier comments, area code 208 covers the entire state of Idaho, it covers a relatively large area, serves many communities of interest, and has a relatively low population density compared to those of major cities across the country; consequently, people here are probably not accustomed to using 10 or 11 digits on a regular basis. Furthermore, although the telecom industry and the PUC staff have supported the overlay, this does not necessarily mean that the overlay is the best choice for consumers: back in the late 1990s, when area code 516 was nearing exhaust, the New York PSC ordered a split based on the opinion of the majority of consumers, despite the telecom industry and the PSC staff supporting the overlay.

In accordance with my earlier comments, I recommend that the PUC hold public hearings on this matter in various major communities across Idaho and/or create a survey for consumers to fill out (online or offline). This way, the opinion of the general public on this issue can be better gaged: if the majority of the additional feedback received from the public is in favor of the overlay, then the PUC can reaffirm its original decision; otherwise, if the additional feedback is mostly in favor of a split, then I strongly urge the PUC to change its decision to a split (as I mentioned in my earlier comments, under this option, I recommend that the southern/western section – Area B – retain area code 208 while the northern/eastern section – Area A – change to the new area code 986, since Area B, which contains Boise and surrounding areas, has a greater population and more phone users than Area A).

Sincerely,



Tom Li