(text box: 1)BEFORE THE IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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| IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITIONS FROM CITIZENS IN ABERDEEN, IDAHO REQUESTING EXTENDED AREA SERVICE (EAS) BETWEEN ABERDEEN AND AMERI-CAN FALLS, AND ABERDEEN AND BLACKFOOT. | )  )  )  )  )  )  ) | CASE NO. GNR-T-96-7  NOTICE OF PETITION |

On October 26, 1994, the Commission received a petition containing more than 300 signatures requesting toll-free calling between the exchanges of Aberdeen and Blackfoot.  On July 12, 1996,  the Commission received another petition from a group called “Citizens for EAS in Aberdeen” requesting toll-free calling between the exchanges of Aberdeen and American Falls, and Aberdeen and Blackfoot.  Toll-free calling between exchanges is usually provided via a service arrangement known as extended area service (EAS).  Approximately 75% of Idaho’s exchanges have EAS(footnote: 1) calling to other exchanges.  Local exchange service in Aberdeen is provided by Citizens Telecommunica­tions Company of Idaho and in American Falls and Blackfoot by U S WEST Communications.  Upon its own motion, the Commission initiates this proceeding to examine the reasonableness of establishing EAS routes between Aberdeen and Blackfoot, and between Aberdeen and American Falls.

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that the petitions generally assert that Aberdeen is located approximately 15 miles from American Falls and 40 miles from Blackfoot with no geographical barriers between the exchanges.  The petitions maintain that because of the close proximity of these neighboring communities, many of the residents of Aberdeen call these towns daily for work, government, and community needs.  The petitions also point out that hospitals and nursing facilities used by citizens of Aberdeen are located in American Falls and Blackfoot.  They further state that the majority of the citizens are willing to pay a monthly fee for extended area service.  The petitions also generally claim that EAS calling will make it easier to gain access to computer and information service companies, e.g., obtaining Internet access.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that in Case No. USW-S-96-4 the Commission is considering four local calling areas or EAS regions in southern Idaho.  Included in these four calling regions is an Idaho Falls region which includes the following U S WEST exchanges: Idaho Falls, Rigby, Ririe, Roberts, Blackfoot, Shelley, Firth, and Rexburg. A Pocatello region is also being considered for a calling region in Case No. USW-S-96-4, which includes the following U S WEST exchanges: Pocatello, Inkom, American Falls, Lava Hot Springs, McCammon, Downey, Grace, Bancroft, and Soda Springs.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that this proceeding has been initiated on the Commission’s own Motion to consider the reasonableness of providing EAS between Aberdeen and American Falls, and between Aberdeen and Blackfoot.  Further scheduling will be accomplished at a later time.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that Citizens Telecommunications Company of Idaho and U S WEST Communications are designated as parties to this case.

DATED at Boise, Idaho this day of August 1996.

Myrna J. Walters

Commission Secretary

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**FOOTNOTES**

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    1“Toll-free” EAS is something of a misnomer because the costs associated with converting a former long-distance toll route to a toll-free EAS route are usually recovered from the affected customers by increasing their rates for local service.

**COMMENTS AND ANNOTATIONS**

Text Box 1:

**TEXT BOXES**

Office of the Secretary

Service Date

August 20, 1996