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

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| IN THE MATTER OF U S WEST COMMUNICATIONS, INC.’S FILING  OF TARIFF ADVICE NO. 96-01-N | )  )  )  ) | CASE NO. USW-N-96-1  NOTICE OF PREHEARING CONFERENCE |

On February 5, 1996, U S WEST Communications, Inc. (U S WEST) filed Tariff Advice No. 96-01-N restricting the availability of its Centron and Centraflex System 2 services in northern Idaho to customers of record as of March 11, 1996.  Centron and Centrex services are central office-based services that provide internal switching capabilities to business customers.  U S WEST proposes to grandfather such services to existing customers, and offer new customers a new product within six to nine months.

On February 14, 1996, the Commission received a formal complaint from MCI Telecommunications (MCI) concerning U S WEST’s filing.  In the complaint, MCI states that “[t]he attempted withdrawal prevents MCI from competing in the local exchange market since MCI has no present ability to practically or economically duplicate Centrex Plus service from any other source.”  MCI asserted it “is contemplating applying for authority to provide local exchange service in Idaho which could include the resale of U S WEST Centrex Plus Service.”   MCI contends the attempted withdrawal of Centrex Plus services with respect to new customers is discriminatory and contrary to state and federal law in, among others, sections 251 (b)(1), (c)(2), and (c)(4) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.  The Commission also received complaints from AT&T Communications of the Mountain States, Inc. and Shared Communications Inc., expressing concerns about the withdrawal of these services and citing the provisions of section 251 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

The Commission issued a Summons to U S WEST directing it to file an answer to the complaints.  U S WEST filed its answer on March 22, 1996.

In order to avoid any unnecessary delays in this case, it is prudent and efficient to schedule a prehearing conference on April 9, 1996, for any or all of the purposes identified in the Commission’s Rule of Procedure 211, including formulating or simplifying the issues, obtaining concessions of fact or to identify documents to avoid unnecessary proof, arranging for the exchange of proposed exhibits or prepared testimony, limiting witnesses, scheduling discovery and hearings, establishing procedures at the hearings, discussing settlement offers or making settlement offers, and to address any other matter that may expedite the orderly conduct and disposition of the proceedings in this case.

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a prehearing conference is scheduled in this case for APRIL 9, 1996, AT 3:30 P.M., IN THE HEARING ROOM OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION, 472 WEST WASHINGTON STREET, BOISE, IDAHO (334-0300).  The prehearing conference shall be for the purposes outlined in this Notice, or as set forth in the Commission’s Rule of Procedure No. 211 (IDAPA 31.01.01.211).

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that all hearings and prehearing conferences in this matter will be held in facilities meeting the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.  Persons needing the help of a sign language interpreter or other assistance of the kind that the Commission is obligated to provide under the Americans with Disabilities Act in order to participate in or to understand the testimony and argument at a public hearing may ask the Commission to provide a sign language interpreter or other assistance at the hearing.  The request for assistance must be received at least five (5) working days before the hearing by contacting the Commission Secretary at:

IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

PO BOX 83720

BOISE, IDAHO  83720-0074

(208) 334-0338  (TELEPHONE)

(208) 334-3151  (TEXT TELEPHONE)

(208) 334-3762  (FAX)

DATED at Boise, Idaho this day of March 1996.

Myrna J. Walters

Commission Secretary

vld/N:uswn961.ws

**COMMENTS AND ANNOTATIONS**

Text Box 1:

**TEXT BOXES**

Office of the Secretary

Service Date

March 26, 1996