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Carla M. Butler
Sr. Paralegal

May 20, 2005

Frances Nichols Anglin
Oregon Public Utility Commission
550 Capitol St., NE
Suite 215
Salem, OR 97301

Re: AR 492

Dear Ms. Nichols Anglin:

Enclosed for filing please find an original and (5) copies of Reply Comments for the above entitled docket, filed by Qwest on behalf of Local Exchange Carriers of Oregon consisting of Qwest Corporation, Centrytel, Oregon Telecommunications Association, Sprint and Verizon Northwest, Inc., along with a certificate of service.

If you have any question, please do not hesitate to give me a call.

Sincerely,



Carla M. Butler

CMB:

Enclosure

cc: Service List (via e-mail)

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**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
OF OREGON**

AR 492

In the Matter of a Rulemaking to Amend)
OAR Chapter 860, Division 023, 032 and)
034 to Adopt Rule Changes, Minimum)
Service Quality Standards for Providing)
Retail Telecommunications Services)

**REPLY COMMENTS FROM
CENTURYTEL
OREGON TELECOMMUNICATIONS
ASSOCIATION
QWEST CORPORATION
SPRINT
VERIZON NORTHWEST INC.**

The Local Exchange Carriers of Oregon consisting of CenturyTel, Qwest Corporation, Sprint, Verizon Northwest Inc. and the small companies represented by the Oregon Telecommunications Association (LECs) submit the following reply comments and recommendations regarding the rules proposed in AR 492.

1. General Comments

In the LECs opening comments, the LECs identified to Staff six areas of concern for consideration of modifications to existing rules or changes to Staff's proposed new rules. The LECs have reviewed Staff's reply comments dated May 17, 2005 and support Staff's revised comments relating to adding new Force Majeure language, clarification of the definition of an access line and establishing a new trunk blocking standard. The LECs would like to commend Staff for working with all providers to try to reach resolution on items of dispute with solutions that work for both parties. The LECs would also like to commend Staff for recommending an alternative measurement for the Business Office Access standard.

2. Specific Comments

A. 860-023-0055, 860-032-0012 and 860-034-0390, Section (5) Trouble Reports

The LECs continue to ask the Commission for consideration for raising the Report Rate standard from two reports to three reports per 100 access lines for wire centers with 1,000 or less access lines. With such a small sample size of access lines, two reports is a very small margin for error and is not indicative of a pattern of trouble. Staff has indicated that it looked at three options for small wire center relief. Staff looked at raising the Report Rate to three reports per 100 access lines, adding one more month to the number of out-of-standard months in a 12-month

period before considering the wire center out of standard and grouping small rural wire centers into mutually agreed groups while keeping the group under 1,000 lines. Staff has decided that they can not support any of the three options and did not mention the reasons why.

The LECs appreciate Staff's willingness to look at different options to achieve small wire center relief. The LECs still believe that this issue is a major concern and still requires additional consideration. The LECs have analyzed several small wire centers and have determined that in most cases trouble reports are random. The trouble reports do not represent a pattern of common equipment or facility trouble and the reports are spread throughout the entire wire center.

Two of the options Staff looked at do not address the issue of not being able to identify common trouble. Combining two small wire centers would increase the sample size and would possibly produce fewer out-of-standard occurrences for wire centers but the combination of wire centers would not help isolate common trouble. The same could be said about allowing one more month to the out-of-standards months prior to the wire center being out of standards. It may delay an out-of standard occurrence, but it does not isolate common trouble.

The LECs continue to request that the Report Rate be raised to 3 reports for any wire center with 1,000 or less access lines. The LECs do not feel this is a request that is unreasonable. The Commission does not require providers with less than 1,000 lines to report any service quality results. The LECs also ask the Commission to review Attachment 5, pages 17 -31, of Staff's initial comments. This is a matrix of Service Quality Standards by State. This matrix shows that the Report Rate standards for most other states are in excess of 2 reports for all wire centers and not just those with less than 1,000 lines. The LECs are not being unreasonable and asking for the standard to be changed for all wire centers even though the argument could be made based upon National Data for Similar Standards. We are only asking that the standard be changed for wire centers with 1,000 or fewer access lines.

B. 860-023-0055, 860-032-0012 and 860-034-0390, Section (9) Interruption of Service Notification

The LECs had requested Staff to consider FCC reporting in establishing this new rule. Staff determined that the FCC reporting threshold was unreasonably high and is recommending the elimination of any reference to number of customers affected. The LECs understand Staff's concerns and would be able to accept their recommendation with the following minor modification:

Current Proposed Staff Language:

9 (A) Cable, which excludes service wires and wires placed in lieu of cable, or electronic outages lasting longer than 30 minutes.

LEC Additional Language:

9 (A) Cable, which excludes service wires and wires placed in lieu of cable, or electronic outages affecting 25% or more of the wire center working access lines, lasting longer than 30 minutes.

The current proposed Staff language would be too burdensome on all providers. Does Staff want to know every time there is a 6 pair cable that is cut? The LECs understanding of the purpose of the new rule is to alert the Commission of any significant outage as stated in Staff's proposed language in Section (9).

C. 860-023-0055, 860-032-0012 and 860-034-0390, Provisioning and Held Orders for Lack of Facilities

The Staff has added language to insure that the providers are not changing due dates on orders without the customers approval. It is the LECs understanding that this language is being added to insure that all held orders are counted accurately and that dates are not being changed to get around counting orders as being held. The language being proposed states that the date can only be changed if requested by the customer. The LECs do not have the systems available in the initial customer contact to know if the order will become held. An initial due date is given to the customer during the first customer contact. A large majority of these dates do not change. However, if during the order process it is determined that the order can not be worked by the original due date it will become a held order. The customer is notified of the change. This change is not requested by the customer, it is required operationally by the LEC. The LECs propose adding "unless the order becomes a held order due to facility reasons" to the Staff's proposed language. The new language would state "The large telecommunications utility may change the initial commitment date only if requested by the customer unless the order becomes a held order due to facility reasons.

DATED this 20th day of May, 2005.

Submitted by:



Qwest Corporation, and on behalf of:
CenturyTel
Oregon Telecommunications Association
Sprint Corporation
Verizon Northwest, Inc

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

AR 492


I hereby certify that on the 20th day of May 2005, I served the foregoing **REPLY COMMENTS** in the above entitled docket on the following persons via electronic transmission, to their e-mail address listed below.

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DATED this 20th day of May, 2005.

QWEST CORPORATION

By: 

 RON TRULLINGER – Qwest Corporation