

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

OF OREGON

ARB 527B(5)

In the Matter of)
)
TCG OREGON and QWEST CORPORATION) STAFF COMMENTS
)
Fifth Amendment to Interconnection Agreement)
Submitted for Commission Approval Pursuant to)
Section 252(e) of the Telecommunications Act)
of 1996.)

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE AMENDMENT

On June 30, 2006, TCG Oregon and Qwest Corporation (Qwest) filed a fifth amendment to the interconnection agreement previously approved by the Public Utility Commission of Oregon (Commission). The parties seek approval of the amendment under Section 252(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. The Commission provided notice by posting an electronic copy of the agreement on the World Wide Web, at: <http://www.puc.state.or.us/caragmnt/>. The Commission Staff (Staff) offers these comments.

Under the Act, the Commission must approve or reject an agreement or amendment thereto reached through voluntary negotiation within 90 days of filing. The Commission may reject an agreement or amendment only if it finds that:

- (1) the agreement (or portion thereof) discriminates against a telecommunications carrier not a party to the agreement; or
- (2) the implementation of such agreement or portion thereof is not consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity.

The amendment recognizes and implements the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Triennial Review and Remand Order (TRRO). The effective date of the TRRO is March 11, 2005. The rates listed in the amendment are designated as transition rates. The TRRO contains provisions for transitioning the rate changes required by the order and sets a timeframe for implementing those changes. All companies are under the same rules and obligations with regard to the transition period thus removing the discrimination factor. The amendment memorializes the change designated in the rules. Staff believes the amendment is consistent with the provisions within the TRRO.

Staff notes that an interconnection agreement or amendment thereto has no effect or force until approved by a state Commission. *See* 47 U.S.C. Sections 252 (a) and (e). Accordingly, Staff points out that the effective date of this filing will be the date the Commission signs an order approving it, and that any provision stating that the parties' agreement is effective prior to that date is not enforceable.

Staff concludes that the amendment itself does not appear to discriminate against telecommunications carriers who are not parties to the agreement and does not appear to be inconsistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity.

Dated at Salem, Oregon, this 20th day of July, 2006.

Celeste Hari
Telecommunications Analyst
Competitive Issues
Telecommunications Division