

STATE OF NEW YORK

Public Service Commission

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FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATELY

08123/07-C-1486

COMMENT SOUGHT ON OPTION FOR 315 AREA CODE — Overlay Allows Customers to Retain Current 10-digit Phone Numbers —

Albany, NY—12/9/08—The New York State Public Service Commission (Commission) is seeking comment concerning the Recommended Decision of an administrative law judge to provide relief for the 315 area code in the form of an overlay, rather than any of the geographic splits under consideration. The Commission may approve, reject or modify the Recommended Decision.

The 315 area code relief proposals and the administrative law judge's Recommended Decision can be obtained by visiting the Commission's www.AskPSC.com consumer Web site.

The Recommended Decision concludes that the overlay represents the fairest and most equitable solution for 315 area code relief. An overlay allows all existing telephone customers in the region to retain their current 10-digit phone numbers — something overwhelmingly requested by those making comments in this proceeding.

An overlay is when a new area code is superimposed on the existing region with the result of two area codes serving the same region. With an overlay, calls would not be completed without first dialing 1, plus the 3-digit area code, and then the 7-digit number, oftentimes referred to as 11-digit dialing.

While there may be some initial inconvenience in having to adjust to 11-digit dialing once a new overlay code is introduced, overlays have been successfully implemented downstate over the past decade in the New York City region. Also, the proliferation of speed-dialing and other programmable number features in modern telephone equipment have ameliorated the effect of dialing extra digits. Five of 14 area codes in New York State already use 11-digit dialing for all calls.

In addition, an overlay treats consumers in the region more fairly and equitably. A geographic split would necessarily impose virtually all of the burdens of area code relief on residential, business, and institutional telephone users in the zone receiving the new area code, while users in the zone that retained the existing 315 code would bear essentially no burdens.

The Recommended Decision expresses the view that since there is no consensus consumer preference to be served by adopting a particular geographic split option, there is no good reason to choose “winners” and “losers” to provide area code relief. The administrative law judge concludes that an overlay would both fulfill the consensus desire of commenting consumers and better serve the interests of fairness.

How to Comment

During the spring of 2008, the Commission held 14 hearings in the 315 area code region for the public to comment on the proposals to provide area code relief. The public may provide their comments by December 31, 2008, concerning the administrative law judge’s Recommended Decision by mailing their comments to Jaclyn A. Brillling, Secretary, Public Service Commission, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223-1350. Your comments should refer to “Case 07-C-1486—315 Area Code.”

Toll-free Opinion Line: Comments may also be submitted through the Commission’s Opinion Line at 1-800-335-2120. This number is designed to take comments about pending cases from in-state callers, 24 hours a day. Callers should select English or Spanish and press “1” to leave comments about the proposal.

The Internet: Comments may also be submitted via the “PSC Comment Form” in the “Consumer Assistance” file accessed through the Commission’s www.AskPSC.com Web site. Many libraries offer free Internet access.

All statements and comments received concerning the administrative law judge’s Recommended Decision will be placed in the public case file and made available for public inspection in the Commission’s file room in its Albany office, Central Files, 14th floor, Three Empire State Plaza.