

Before the Colorado Public Utilities Commission

Outline of Testimony of Ronald J. Binz

1. Name, President, Competition Policy Institute. CPI is an independent, non-profit organization that promotes policies to bring competition to energy and telecommunications markets in ways that benefit consumers.
2. As you may know, I also serve on the North American Numbering Council (NANC). In fact, just returned from DC where the NANC created a new working group to coordinate activities surrounding efficient use of numbering resources. Triggered by a letter from Richard Metzger asking the NANC to forward recommendations to FCC for policies and standards permitting uniform national number pooling practices by end of 1999.
3. Doesn't really help this case here. Colorado was, unfortunately on the cusp; in need of area code relief just about the time that 1000 block pooling and TN pooling proposals began to have life.
4. Commission has faced some tough choices. The decision to adopt an overlay in preference to a geographic split. While some may have disagreed with the decision, important to realize that
5. Commission Should Not Adopt Wireless Overlay
  - a. Legal Problems: Very likely will not be approved by FCC
    - i. Seen no signs FCC of movement on this issue; if anything there's probably more reason than ever to keep away from solutions that might not be competitively neutral
    - ii. NANC vote on allied issue 7-digit dialing was pretty strong; also no movement there
  - b. Policy Problems: Over time, a wireless overlay will become a definition problem as wireline and wireless converge.
    - i. PCS
    - ii. wireless loops, especially in new construction. LMDS auction just ended
  - c. Practical Problems:
    - i. Number take back will be hugely unpopular; time needed to accomplish it is large
    - ii. Appeals and process delays
6. All signs are that the Commission should proceed with its schedule for mandatory 10-digit

dialing.

- a. Much has been said about customer confusion ; seems legitimate.
  - b. Delay in 10-digit really doesn't gain much unless the Commission has identified something qualitatively different will happen at the end of that time. Things such as:
    - i. breakthrough on pooling
    - ii. different decision on
  - c. Sounds like burglar alarms can be handled separately.
7. Coloradans appreciate the Commission's stewardship of these issues. Public understands that there are no easy choices; conversely, you can't make everybody happy.
  8. From where I sit, appears best thing to do is proceed on the original schedule.
  9. Thanks for affording me the opportunity to speak today.