

SWIDLER BERLIN SHEREFF FRIEDMAN, LLP

3000 K STREET, NW, SUITE
300

WASHINGTON, DC 20007-5116

TELEPHONE (202)424-7500

FACSIMILE (202) 424-7645

WWW.SWIDLAW.COM

NEW YORK OFFICE

405 LEXINGTON AVENUE

NEW YORK, NY 10174

(212) 758-9500 FAX (212) 758-9526

May 18, 2004

VIA OVERNIGHT DELIVERY

Ms. Carole Washburn, Executive Secretary
Washington Utilities & Transportation Committee
1300 Evergreen Park Drive, S.W.
Olympia, Washington 98504

Re: Docket No. UT-043013

Dear Ms. Washburn:

Focal Communications Corp. of Washington, Focal Communications Corp., ICG Telecom Group, Inc., Integra Telecom of Washington, Inc., McLeodUSA Telecommunications Services, Inc., and Pac-West Telecomm, Inc. (collectively the "Competitive Carrier Coalition" or "Coalition"), by their attorneys, respectfully respond to Verizon Northwest Inc.'s ("Verizon") Motion to Hold Proceeding in Abeyance until June 15, 2004 ("Motion").

The Coalition would not oppose an abeyance if Verizon would commit not to unilaterally alter the availability of UNEs during the pendency of the stay and the arbitration proceeding. As explained in its Motion to Dismiss, the Coalition believes that this arbitration proceeding should be dismissed and is a waste of the parties' resources. Given this, the Coalition would not oppose Verizon's motion so long as the *status quo* is preserved and no party is prejudiced by the delay in resolving the issues in this proceeding. Verizon has indicated, however, that it is unwilling to make this commitment and for this reason, the Coalition cannot support Verizon's Motion.

Please contact the undersigned if you have any questions. An original and twelve (12) copies of this filing are attached as well as a diskette containing an electronic version of the filing. Please date-stamp the enclosed extra copy of this filing and return it in the attached self-addressed, postage prepaid envelope provided.

Sincerely,

Edward W. Kirsch
Counsel for the Competitive Carrier Coalition

cc: UT 043013 Service list