

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION  
COMMISSION**

In the matter of the Notice of	)	
Proposed Rulemaking on requiring	)	Docket No. UT-991573
interexchange carriers to serve all	)	
areas of the state in a competitively	)	
neutral way	)	

**COMMENTS OF GTE NORTHWEST INCORPORATED**

GTE Northwest Incorporated supports the adoption of the proposed rule as currently drafted. The proposed rule as undergone several revisions in response to comments by parties over the past several months. Concerns that competition might be adversely affected have been adequately addressed by revisions in the current draft.

The Washington Utilities and Transport Commission ("Commission") should allow the competitive market to work as Congress envisioned - in a "pro-competitive, de-regulatory" manner. Regulators should minimize involvement in the competitive market, and allow service providers to determine how best to compete in the interexchange market. The proposed rule strikes the appropriate balance between concerns for competition and for the consumer, and should be adopted.