



**PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF
INQUIRY**
(RCW 34.05.310)

CR-101 (7/10/97)
Do **NOT** use for expedited repeal or adoption

Agency: WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Subject of possible rule making: Telecommunications company line extensions. The Commission will explore matters relating to line extension policies and tariffs, including a review of existing WAC 480-120-071, under Docket No. UT-991737. The inquiry will include consideration of whether the present rule results in very high customer charges for some line extensions, and if so, what problems that causes; whether different rule provisions would alleviate problems; the effects of possible changes on the public and affected companies; and what rule provisions should be adopted or amended. The Commission will also consider how the present line extension rule and any proposed changes relate to the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996.

(a) Statutes authorizing the agency to adopt rules on this subject:
RCW 80.01.040, RCW 80.04.160 and RCW 80.36.300.

(b) Reasons why rules on this subject may be needed and what they might accomplish: At present, some Washington residents and businesses go without telephone service because line extension charges are prohibitively high. That imposes barriers for commercial and personal communications between the affected citizens and others, and prevents emergency communication. The Telecommunications Act of 1996, Public Law 104-104, 110 Stat. 154 provides that universally affordable telecommunications services that are comparable in quality and price between urban and rural areas should be available at rates that are "fair, just, reasonable and sufficient." Rulemaking may clarify the roles of customers and companies, and assist in finding a balance that meets the goals expressed in federal law.

(c) Identify other federal and state agencies that regulate this subject and the process coordinating the rule with these agencies:
The Commission will review orders and rules of the Federal Communications Commission in its inquiry.

(d) Process for developing new rule (check all that apply):

- Negotiated rule making
- Pilot rule making
- Agency study
- Other (describe)

The Commission will ask for initial written comments, and will provide the opportunity for additional comments. The Commission will schedule workshops with representatives of affected constituencies in a manner designed to seek consensus among affected interests regarding any rule proposal.

(e) How interested parties can participate in the decision to adopt the new rule and formulation of the proposed rule before publication:
(List names, addresses, telephone, fax numbers of persons to contact; describe meetings, other exchanges of information, etc.)
SEE ATTACHED.

CODE REVISER USE ONLY

*Filed with the Code Reviser's Office
November 17, 1999 at 11:39 a.m.
WSR #99-23-110*

NAME (TYPE OR PRINT)
CAROLE J. WASHBURN

SIGNATURE

TITLE
SECRETARY

DATE
11/17/99

(e) Interested persons may contact the Secretary, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, P. O. Box 47250, Olympia, Washington, 98504-7250, 360-664-1174 (Fax: 360-586-1150). Such persons may submit comments, as specified below, or may ask to be included in the Commission's list of interested persons for the proceeding.

WRITTEN COMMENTS

Written comments in response to the CR-101 from persons interested in the subject matter of this proposed rulemaking may be filed with the Commission Secretary, referencing Docket No. UT-991737, not later than **December 10, 1999**. All commenters are asked, but not required, to file an original and 10 copies of their written comments. The Commission also requests, but does not require, that comments be provided on a 3½ inch IBM formatted high-density disk, in WordPerfect version 5.1 or later, labeled with the docket number of this proceeding and the commenter's name and type of software used. The Commission may offer additional opportunities to provide written comments. Interested persons may file additional written comments in response to any such invitation. Interested persons may also attend and participate in the workshop described below and in any other workshop that may be scheduled. The Commission will provide written notice of any additional preproposal workshops to all commenters and to any other persons specifically asking to receive notice in this rulemaking proceeding.

NOTICE OF WORKSHOPS

A workshop will be held on December 15, **1999**, beginning at 1:30 p.m., in the Commission Meeting Room 108, First Floor, Chandler Plaza, 1300 S. Evergreen Park Drive S.W., Olympia, Washington. The Commission's teleconference bridge line will be available for this workshop. A limited number of teleconference ports will be available and will be assigned one to an organization, first come first served. Persons wishing to attend via the teleconference bridge line must contact Nancy Moen at 360-664-1140 no later than 5:00 p.m., December 13, 1999. Questions may be addressed to Bob Shirley at 360-664-1292, or e-mail at bshirley@wutc.wa.gov, or by mail at the address on this page.

A second workshop will be held on January 13, 2000 from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Okanogan Public Utility District, 1331 Second Avenue North, Okanogan, Washington.

The Commission also contemplates a later workshop for discussion of any discussion draft rule.

NOTICE

TO CONTINUE RECEIVING NOTICES AND INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RULEMAKING -- The Commission wants to ensure its mailings are sent to persons who are interested in the topic and want to receive that information. ANY PERSON WHO COMMENTS will continue to receive notices and information. If you do not submit comments but wish to remain on the mailing list for this rulemaking, please advise the Records Center by any one of the following methods: (1) send a note with your name, address (or a copy of your mailing label), and telephone and fax numbers referencing Docket No. UT-991737, and the words "Please keep me on the mailing list"; or (2) E-mail your name, address, telephone and fax numbers, referencing Docket No. UT-991737, and the words "Please keep me on the mailing list" to records@wutc.wa.gov. Please note that all information in the mailings will be accessible through the Commission's Internet web site at <http://www.wutc.wa.gov/>. **THOSE PARTIES WHO DO NOT RESPOND MAY NOT RECEIVE FURTHER MAILINGS OR INFORMATION ON THE RULEMAKING.**