

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Petition of
VERIZON NORTHWEST, INC.
For Waiver of WAC 480-120-071(2)(a).

Docket No. UT-011439

COMMISSION STAFF'S RESPONSE TO
MOTION OF VERIZON NORTHWEST
INC. THAT COMMISSIONERS PRESIDE
AT HEARING

On May 7, 2002, Verizon Northwest Inc. filed a motion to have the Commissioners preside over the adjudicative proceeding in this matter, currently scheduled for July 2, 2002. Staff takes no position on this motion, nor does it object to rescheduling the hearing to a different day, if necessary, to fit the Commissioners' calendars, should they decide to preside over the hearing.

Staff does, however, take exception to certain of Verizon's characterizations of the issues at hand in this case, as well as of Staff's positions on those issues. The Commission should not take as established facts, for example, Verizon's assertions that this case involves "two remote locales" with "ongoing extraordinary maintenance burdens and costs;" nor that Staff has or is "taking a policy position," regarding requests for line extension waivers, that "may be interpreted

as placing no limit on the costs and burdens to be incurred by companies or their customers.”

Nor has Staff advocated that “in reality, all line extension requests must be fulfilled at any cost.”

Verizon Motion, at 2. Staff disagrees with Verizon’s characterizations, and further believes such hyperbole is not necessary to Verizon’s motion requesting the Commissioners to preside over the hearing.

DATED this 17th day of May, 2002.

CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE
Attorney General

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