NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF

CASE NO. 98-C-0689 -- New area codes for Long Island's Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

PUBLIC STATEMENT HEARING held at Village Town Hall, 155 Washington Avenue, Mineola, New York on Thursday, the 24th of March, 1999, commencing at 1:00 p.m.

BEFORE: JOEL LINSIDER,
Administrative Law Judge

ALSO PRESENT: JAMES D. BENNETT, Commissioner

PAT CURRAN, Staff
NANCY TOURVILLE, Staff
JILL WASSER, Staff
THOMAS BURKE, Staff

ORIGINAL

JUDGE LINSIDER: Let's go on the record. Good afternoon. This is New York State public Service Commission, Case 98-C-0689. I'm Joel Linsider, the Administrative Law Judge assigned to this case and to report on it to the Commission.

With me on the bench are Thomas J. Dunleavy and James D. Bennet, two members of the Public Service Commission, the agency that will eventually decide the case.

This hearing is part of a broader proceeding in which the Commission is considering th use of telephone numbering resources within New York State. It is examining how those resources are being used. And how best to augment those resources by introducing new area codes when and where necessary.

Many of these matters are within the purview of the Federal Communication Commission. And in some of those instances, the New York Commission's role must be primarily one of advocating steps it believes the federal authority should take. But we do have authority

subject to certain federal requirements to determine how an additional area code is to be assigned in a given area. And that is the purpose of this part of the proceeding.

Telephone numbers are now in short supply in the 914 area code serving the lower Hudson Valley, the 716 area code serving Western New York State and here in the 516 area code. Because the situation here appears to be the most acute of the three, we are examining it first. And Staff of the Department of Public Service has prepared an options paper that describes and evaluates the various ways in which an additional area code can be supplied.

Staff will be preparing similar papers for the 914 and 716 areas. The alternatives identified by Staff, were discussed at the educational forum that just concluded. And copies of Staff's paper and the informational leaflet are available here. The Staff paper was issued for formal written comments by the active parties to this proceeding. And we have received comments of various segments of telecommunication industry and from the State

Consumer Protection Board.

Now, we want to hear from you. And this public statement hearing is one of several ways in which you can express to the Commission your views regarding the proceeding. Anyone planning to speak at this hearing should have filled out a card by now. And I will call speakers from those cards. If you wish to speak and haven't yet filled out a card, please do so now so that you can be called. The cards are on a table by the door.

At this hearing, your statements will be taken down by the stenographer and will become part of the case record to be considered by the Commission as it decides the case. If you have a prepared written statement that you are planning to read, I ask that you give a copy to the stenographer.

If you want to make your views know but don't wish to speak here, you can submit written comments. They should be address to Debra Renner, Acting Secretary, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York, 12223. You may also e-mail comments to our website,

www.dps.state.ny.us. And may dial the Commission's toll-free opinion line, 1-800-335-2120.

All of these comments will be summarized in accordance with the Commission, which will take them into account along with the views of the active parties and the advice of Staff, myself included, as it decides the case. The Commission's Staff is represented here by a group of people, who you met earlier, Nancy Tourville, Pat Curran, Tom Burke, and Jill Wasser. They are all available to discuss any specific concerns you may have regarding the effects of potential area code changes on your telephone service.

You are, of course, free to make a statement regarding your own service. But if you have a specific problem that needs to be addressed, it may be more helpful to simply discuss it with a Staff member.

Finally, let me thank the speakers in advance and let me thank all of you for coming. The involvement of the public is important in ensuring that the Commission has the record it

needs to each the best possible decision. Before I all on the first speaker, let me call on Commissioner Bennett for any remarks that he may have.

COMMISSIONER BENNETT: Thank you. I think Judge Linsider has summarized oy quite well. I am one of the four members of the Public Service Commission and the ultimate decision will be ours. We'll probably make the decision within the next two months, because a decision has to be made in a short time before there is a serious problem of number exhaust. But also so there's sufficient time, six months to a year, for the public to adjust to whatever the change will be.

One statement I'd like to make before these hearings is as a member of the Commission, I sit in what's called a quasi-judicial capacity. That's a technical word that means I have to be careful of what I say. Because I sit like a judge and if a judge was listening to a case and half way through the case he said, hey sounds like a good solution or I think the guy's guilty, obviously the judge is not showing

proper consideration for the case.

So it's really forbidden for me as a member of the Commission to indicate my feelings one way or the other. Because that's what's called predecisional bias. I would say this, we have a situation where 516 area code numbers are running out. We want to come up with a solution that makes sense and that is good for our Island and for the state and that can also cause us the least disruption to the lives of our citizens. We all know life is complex enough without having new problems with new area codes.

By way of summary, which some of you may have heard in the informational portion and some of you may not have been here for that. There seem to be two basic concepts. One is called the geographical split, where Nassau County would have one area code and Suffolk would have another area code. One of the main issues there would be which county kept area code 516, which would get the new area code. There are certain pros and cons to the geographic split, which have been set forth in materials presented by the Staff and by the people from Consumer

Protection and the other agencies. At the risk of engaging in something called predecisional bias, I don't want to go over the pros and cons. But the one concept is a geographic split. Fairly simple except one county will have a new area code.

The other is called an overlay. And the description is a little more complex. Both Nassau and Suffolk if you'll have a telephone number now, you'll keep 516. Essentially, the new telephone numbers will get new area codes. This creates the problem of the person across the street is a new neighbor who gets a phone in 2000 and you have a phone across the street from 1998 will have a different area code. The other problem is something called ten-digit dialing. Ten-digit dialing would require all calls that you make, whether it's from yourself to your neighbor next door who's been your neighbor for years and has always been a 516, would require you to dial ten digits. The reason for this is in my own view fundamentally part of the national telecommunications policy. It is called, and I will say this, mandated on us by

the Federal Communication Commission.

Once, again, there are a lot of complex reasons, pro and con, as to why ten-digit dialing is good or bad. The FCC believes that once people adjust to it, it will be the way of the future. It'll lead to a far better national telecommunication system and that is why they mandate it. We do not think it's totally necessary from the Public Service Commission. We have had a proceeding against the FCC seeking a waiver of the ten-digit dialing for 516. And they're not going to do away with it because it's part of their national policy, but we're seeking a waiver for the 516 area code. To date, we have not gotten a decision. As I understand it the FCC, has granted no waivers to anyone or any area in the country, so it's what you would call a tough case. But we have done what we could to try to lift the burden of ten-digit dialing if we go to the overlay. However, that is a very real possibility of the overlay comes into effect.

So with that attempt to summarize some of the informational aspects that some of you may

not have heard if you weren't here earlier for the informational session. I'll ask Judge Linsider to proceed.

JUDGE LINSIDER: Thank you, Commissioner. The first speaker is Timothy Carey of the State Consumer Protection Board.

MR. CAREY: Good afternoon, Judge Linsider, Commissioner Bennett.

I am Timothy S. Carey, and I serve as the Chairman and Executive Director of the New York state Consumer Protection Board. I want to commend Chairman Helmer and the State Public Service Commission for providing this opportunity for Bell Atlantic customers and public officials to express their views on how Long Island's telephone number exhausting problem should be solved. It is extremely important that the Public Service Commission obtain and rely heavily upon the viewpoints of residential and business consumers who would be affected by any of the new area code proposals.

The State Consumer Protection Board was created by the State Legislature in 1970. As the State's top Consumer Watchdog, the Board is

involved in a broad array of consumer issues. In addition to representing the interests of residential and small business matters before both state and federal regulators, the CPB conducts consumer investigations, research and analysis; develops consumer education programs and materials; and responds; to individual consumer complaints by working to settle disputes through voluntary agreements.

Before identifying our specific concerns in this proceeding, it is important that consumers understand the primary reason the tremendous growth in the demand for telephone numbers in the 516 area code. That development is due in large part to the pro-growth economic policies Governor Pataki has initiated over the last four years. The success of those policies is evident by the strength of New york's economy and the continued growth of the New York City metropolitan area, including Long Island, as the telecommunications capital of the world. New telephone lines are being demanded by new businesses entering Long Island and by business and residential customers who are increasing

their use of wireless telephones, the internet, fax machines and pagers.

Largely as a result of that growth, the 516 area code will run out of telephone numbers that may be assigned to customers before the end of 1999 under the current system, the information session that took place earlier today addressed two main options for solving the telephone number exhaustion problem, and overlay and a geographic split. An overlay, under which a new area code would be created throughout Nassau and Suffolk counties, may require consumers to dial 11 digits to call their neighbor next door. The alternative, a geographic split, would require about half of Long Island's businesses and residents to obtain a new area code for their telephone number.

Those consumer would incur substantial costs to inform their family, neighbors and acquaintance, as well as their customers, of their new area code. Overall, in make its decision regarding this matter, the Commission should minimize customer confusion and the cost that consumers must bear, recognizing that any

new area code will cause some customer disruption.

There are three main points that I urge the Commission to consider very carefully. First, all technological solutions that may postpone the need for new area codes, including rate center consolidation and number pooling, should be fully investigated.

Second, the Commission should not underestimate the costs that would be incurred by residents and businesses on Long Island if they are forced to change their area code, as would be required for roughly half of Long Islanders if the geographic split option is adopted.

Third, the Commission should carefully consider the potential anti-competitive aspects of an overlay solution.

My first point, the CBP requests that the Commission take aggressive action to ensure that all reasonable measures which might delay the need for a new area code on Long Island have been fully considered, and where appropriate, implemented. In particular, we recommend that

the Commission require consolidation of unnecessary rate centers, which are geographic regions used to define local calling area. Three rate centers serve all of Manhattan, but there are more than 60 rate centers on Long Island. Each local exchange carrier must be assigned at least one block of 10,000 telephone numbers in each rate center. Since an unnecessarily large number of rate centers leads to inefficient use of available telephone numbers, the Commission should promptly eliminate unnecessary rate centers.

In addition, the Commission should encourage companies to adopt thousand-block number pooling. Many local telephone service providers have obtained blocks of 10,000 telephone numbers to serve customers from particular rate centers although they serve few, if any, customers from those locations. Under thousand block number pooling, carriers would be assigned blocks of one thousand numbers in each rate center, thereby dramatically reducing the inventory of telephone numbers that are not currently assigned to end-users. The Commission

has experience with thousand-block number pooling through the trial in New York City that began in July 1998, and such measures have been used in other states.

My second main point concerns the customer impact of any new area code solution that would require residential and business customers to change their area code. We urge the Commission not to underestimate the impact on residential and business customers of having to change their area code from 516, which has long been associated with all of Long Island. Under the geographical split alternative, approximately one-half of Long Islanders would have a new area code, and would have to incur costs to notify their family, neighbors and acquaintances of their new area code. Businesses would have to change their business cards, company letterhead, signs and advertising, as well as, notify all their existing customers, thereby incurring substantial costs. Further, businesses that are assigned the new area code would be harmed to the extent that their customers throughout the world did not recognize the new area code or

regarded it with less prestige than the current area code. Accordingly, we urge the Commission to consider the substantial costs that would be incurred by residential and business customers as a result of the geographic split option.

Our final main point concerns the potential anti-competition in local telephone markets is in its infancy and might be harmed by an overlay solution, if Bell Atlantic's customers have greater access to the remaining supply of numbers in the 516 area code than customers of Bell Atlantic's competitors. That result must be avoided to maintain progress toward a competitive local telephone market, and I urge the Commission to ensure that Bell Atlantic's competitors are not harmed if an overlay solution is adopted. In particular, the Commission should encourage carriers with blocks of available numbers in the 516 area code, to make them available to other carriers whose customers require such numbers.

The CPB looks forward to working with the Commission, Bell Atlantic, ratepayers and other interested parties in crafting a plan that

solves this problem while meeting the needs of consumers and businesses on Long Island. I thank you for your kind attention to the points I have made. Thank you, Your Honor.

JUDGE LINSIDER: The next speaker is Raymond Manzo, Administrative Assistant to Assemblyman Marc Herbst.

MR. MANZO: The Assemblyman apologizes for not being here today. But he has his budget that he has to work out. He wrote this up, so it's in the first person. I am, obviously not Mark Herbst.

My name is Marc Herbst and I am New York State Assemblyman representing the 14th Assembly district. I served as the ranking Minority Member of the Assembly Committee on Energy during the 1995, 1996, and 1997 legislative sessions and still serve on the Energy Committee. I aslo served on the Assembly Committee on Corporations, Authorities, and Commissions during that timeframe. I am offering this testimony today to support a geographic split as a solution to providing an adequate number of local telephone numbers on

Long Island.

I would like to first commend Chairman Maureen Helmer and the Staff of the Public Service Commission for their outstanding work in isolating two sound alternatives, an overlay approach and a geographic split approach. Each alternative would ensure that Long Island's telephone consumers would have an ample number of local telephone numbers. I have enjoyed working with Chairman Helmer on a variety of related issues since her appointment as Chairman.

Although both alternatives are sound, I would like to offer some remarks expressing why I believe that a geographic split is in the best interest of Long Island's telephone consumers.

First of all, if a geographic split is chosen, a simple Nassau/Suffolk County division appears to be the best and easiest approach for are code establishment. An already existing Nassau/Suffolk County boundary is easily understood for everyone and should be used. A few exceptions should be made to ensure that certain municipalities can keep the same area

code. For instance, Farmingdale and Amityville are municipalities bisected by county lines.

The geographic split approach would be less confusing to local exchange customers. For example, an overlay would lead to multiple area codes within a single neighborhood, or even within a building.

The geographic split approach also avoids requiring all Long Islanders to dial ten digits within their same area code. Customers would continue to dial seven digits. This is very important since many people, including myself, rely heavily on the mental recollection of phone numbers in certain situations. We are not always in our office next to a rolodex or the pre-programmed telephone, or at home where a phone book or personal index is readily available. A ten digit phone number makes phone number recollection more difficult for all but the most commonly dialed numbers.

Finally, I believe the geographic split approach best fosters competition within the local exchange market. The Public Service Commission has worked diligently to open the

local exchange market to new entrants so Long Island's consumers can benefit from choice. The overly approach could hamper that development because new entrants would have to offer its new customers a phone number in a new area code in most cases. This could deter customers from switching providers, and disadvantage new entrants and ultimately discourage their involvement. The geographic split approach does not negatively impact new entrants.

I do recognize that each alternative is not without its drawback. After carefully evaluating the pros and cons or each, I believe that the geographic split approach is best for my constituents and all of Long Island for the reasons already stated.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my views.

JUDGE LINSIDER: Thank you very much. The next speaker is Tebbie Clift.

MS. CLIFT: My name is Tebbie Clift, I'm a resident of Nassau County and I'm an educator with Cornell Cooperative Extension. I do want

you to know that the opinions that I present today are strictly mine, they're personal and do not reflect those of Cooperative Extension.

I do believe this overlay plan will be less disruptive to the residents and the businesses in Nassau County. And speaking for myself, or others who have friends and family or businesses in other parts of New York or across the United States, I do not believe that having to dial a ten or eleven-digit number is going to be extremely disruptive. I think we do this often in our everyday lives and to me I don't think that that would be extremely disruptive to learn.

In looking at the disadvantages of the overlay, one of the comments is with the geographic split customers would be required to dial an area code for half the numbers that were previously dialable on a seven digit basis. To me that's more confusing. And looking at the total picture, I think that the geographic split would do more to segmentize or provide segments at the communities of Nassau and Suffolk. And my opinion is that we want to keep Long Island

as a total entity.

I believe that programmable phones area already in use extensively. I think they can be expanded to those who find it difficult to remember long number. And I believe that if we go to ten or ten-plus dialing, competition in that area is going to be even greater. And so the prices for that technology are going to go down.

With Cornell Cooperative Extension, I run a consumer helpline where folks call in from all the county, from all over Long Island even, and the point I have observed, when we asked folks to provide their name address and phone number so that we could provide information either by calling them back or by mailing information to them, nine times out of ten I find that individuals will glady provide their name, address, and phone number when it comes to giving their phone number, they will ask automatically or they'll say automatically 516 and then give that number. So whatever dialing code or area code they are provided, I think they're interested in your getting back to them,

therefore, they will automatically provide that ten or eleven digit number. And I think that will become an automatic thing in our lives. I think we're used to that and I don't see that that would be a major problem. Thank you for hearing me.

JUDGE LINSIDER: The next speaker is Mr. John Ringen.

MR. RIGEN: Judge Linsider and Commissioner Bennett, I'm very happy to be able to speak to you today. I have been involved in telephone proceedings before the Public Service Commission for about 20 years. My involvement in telephone rates is very unusual. I started looking at the front pages of telephone directories when I was about five years old and I was fascinated by the telephone rate zones and the initial charges and the overtime charges and so on.

The first time I formerly became involved in telephone rate proceedings was by 1970 when the Public Telephone Commission held hearings to introduce directory assistance and I was an active party in every single New York Telephone Company rate case for about 20 years. Sometimes

I represented myself, but often I was an expert witness for the New York State Consumer Protection Board and I remember working with Richard Kessel when he was in charge of the Board and with Phil Shapiro when he was an attorney for the Board. It was a very enjoyable experience.

Now, I am the president of the faculty union at the New York Institute of Technology. I am an Associate Professor of Life Sciences. And because I had to make up a midterm exam today, I did not have the time, unfortunately, to prepare prepared remarks like many of the other speakers have been able to do. But I would like to present my major concerns about the various approaches which the Commission is considering.

First of all, I live in Queens Village for most of my life. Queens Village is part of New York City and was part of the 212 area code. And several years ago there was a change in the area code in Queens, 212 numbers became 718. It was something that was unfamiliar, but all of us went through this and after a while it became

normal for us to think of us as 718 people not 212 people. And I honestly feel that the people who are concerned about customer reaction or confusion are correct but this will quickly go away if there is a geographic split. Because people in the new area code will, within a period of months or one year at the most, will become used to the new area code and will be thoroughly familiar with the new code.

In connection with this code before I get to some of my other concerns, I think one of the concerns of the Commission might be what this new code should be. I realize that the North American Numbering Plant Administrator is Lock Heed Martin. But I really think that maybe it would be worthwhile for the Public Service Commission to ask them to introduce a code which is similar to the existing 516 area code. I discovered for example that 526 is unused. So I think it would be easy for people to adjust to a geographic split if one area, possibly Nassau retained the 516 code and the other possibly Suffolk had an area code change from 516 to 526. A similar number minimizes the difficulty people

will experience in adjusting to a new area code.

I was listening to the various arguments pro and con, and I have to say that it was very helpful for me to see the argument pro and con on your internet website. I was very happy that you were doing this now. That is very, very helpful.

My major concern is that I feel that the most advantage of a geographic spit was not mentioned at all so far. Right now I live in Westbury. I moved from Queens Village to Westbury last summer. I now have a 516 number. But the 516 area code includes the Nassau region, the West Suffolk as well as the East Suffolk region, three different regions. For residential subscribers if they place a telephone call within their region, and they have residential service not straight service, those calls are not times. But if someone in Nassau County calls Western Suffolk, the calls get timed and during the day the overtime rates are about 4 1/2 cents a minute. So it is very, very important for residential customers to be able to determine very easily whether a call is

home region call or a call to a different region.

Now, let's suppose I live in Westbury and my prefix is 334, and I want to call another 516 number, which let's say is a 469 number, I do not know in advance whether this is going to be a home-region call or a regional call plan call where overtime charges apply. So I have to look at the phone book. Here's the Nassau phone book and on pages 16 and 17 here is a chart showing which central codes are in the Nassau region, which are in the West Suffolk region, which are in East Suffolk unless I take the trouble to find the telephone directory, go through the list, locate the exchange I'm about to call, unless I have the time to do that, I will not know whether the call I am making is a home-region call or not.

I was involved in the telephone proceeding when the regional call plan was instituted. One of the major goals of the Commission in implementing the regional call plan was to enhance customer understanding and simplify the rate structure. And indeed this is what the

Commission did. And I submit that the Commission can go one step further to further simplify the rate structure and further enhance customer understanding by adopting the geographic split proposal recommended by Staff. To me that geographical split proposal is far superior to the idea of an overlay. At least when I was in Queens and you introduces the 917 area code, it was not necessary for me to dial 1-718 and the number if I wanted to call someone else in Queens. This will not be possible here in Nassau. And I really feel it will be a major nuisance for me and for lots of people in Nassau and Suffolk Counties if they have to dial eleven digits, one, the area code and the phone number just to dial someone with the same area code.

So I strongly urge the Commission to adopt the geographic split proposal recommended by Staff.

One other concern I have before I end my remarks. There always has been a sort of bizarre element in the current regional call plan rates. The Nassau region includes locations in Suffolk County. That is because of

the border exchanges of Amityville, Cold Spring Harbor, and Farmingdale. Parts of the exchanges are in Nassau, parts are in Suffolk. I feel that the best possible way of implementing a geographic split proposal is to adopt the Staff recommendation that all Suffolk County locations in those three exchanges be part of the new area code, the Suffolk area code, and also the three Suffolk portions should be part of the West Suffolk region and the regional call plan. And I feel this would greatly enhance customer understanding and simplify rate structure.

Thank you very, very, much. If anyone has any questions including yourselves, I'll be happy to answer. Thank you.

JUDGE LINSIDER: Thank you very much, Mr. Ringen. The next speaker is Andy Lowitt.

MR. LOWITT: Good afternoon, Judge Linsider, Commissioner Bennett. Thank you for allowing me to speak before you today. Like the previous speaker, I do not have a formal outline but I do have some points I want to bring up.

I am the Vice President of Lowitt Alarms and Security Systems based in Hicksville. Our

company is a member of the Long Island Alarm Association, the Metropolitan Burglar and Fire Alarm Association, the Central Station Alarm Association and I'm currently serving as Chairman of the American Society of Industrial Security on Long Island.

Some points I wanted to bring up today are concerns with regard to public safety and life safety issues on Long Island. Currently when a fire alarm or burglar alarm activates it dials a local number. For example, if a fire alarms trips in Mineola, it will dial a 931 exchange in Hicksville. And the alarm will be transmitted successfully and the fire department will be dispatched. Any change to that dialing pattern will necessitate a either reprogramming remotely of the fire communicator or a visit by one of my technicians to the site to replace what we call is a programming chip in the fire control panel. If that does not happen and a ten-digit plane is accepted, that fire signal will not be transmitted properly to my central station assuming that that visit does not take place.

Now, there are several hundred thousand

consumer and business customers who are alarm company subscribers. Not necessarily my company, but many other hundreds of alarm companies on Long Island. Now, any institution of a geographic split will necessitate the reprogramming, for example, of Suffolk County area code changes, we will need to send our technicians to every Suffolk site we have to reprogram that alarm control panel to transmit that fire alarm successfully to us. So our company endorses an overlay plan in hopes that a successful fight with the FCC will allow the continuation of seven-digit dialing. Anything other than seven-digit dialing beings with it many risks, I believe, to life saving in Nassau and Suffolk County.

Our company is striving to do our best to reprogram as expeditiously as possible. But if you're talking about hundreds of thousands of alarm systems and a finite number of technicians, this task is very haunting. So we do recommend an overlay situation that will not require ten or eleven-digit dialing. And should the fight with the FCC fail, we strongly

recommend the maximum permissive dialing period possible. We would recommend 12 to 18 month period where the reprogramming could take place without jeopardizing any lives on Long Island. That's really our concern.

I might just also add that the Central Station Alarm Association does have a lobbyist and is in touch with the FCC on a regular basis. If there's anything that I could do to further the cause of the current suit with the FCC, I would be more than happy to help in any way. Thank you.

JUDGE LINSIDER: Thank you. The next speaker is Peter Gleason.

MR. GLEASON: Good afternoon, Judge Linsider and Commissioner Bennett. Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

From a brief synopsis of this whole situation it is deemed that the 516 area code is in short demand and from here it says because of cellular phones, modems, pagers, and fax machines. I would like to present a suggestion other than an overlay or a geographical or county split and that would be modeled after

New York City in that the 212 and 718 area codes as another speaker had just spoken about, they did indeed do a geographical split. However, to increase immediately the numbers provided, I feel that cellular phones and pages should first be changed and give those a new area code and that would not be unlike New York City in that all cellular phones and pagers today have not a 212 or 718 but a 917 area code, which when anyone dials it the 917 they realize they're either calling a cell phone or a beeper. To change something that has been in effect since 1951 without taking a less restrictive approach, I think would be burdensome to individuals and companies, and as another individual pointed out, from a safety point of view to reprogram fire and safety alarms.

Therefore, that is my suggestion. I think it should be researched a little further.

JUDGE LINSIDER: Thank you. I have to say that without commenting, Commissioner Bennett and I can't comment, but several other individuals have made a similar suggestion. The idea seems to be a popular one. It's not

possible, however, because the FCC forbids it. The 917 area code was a service specific area code that was introduced before the FCC regulations prohibited any service specific or technology specific area code. The 917 was grandfathered for awhile. It's now just been made available. So that idea, which as I say has been a popular one, is not an option.

MR. GLEASON: Thank you for pointing that out to me.

JUDGE LINSIDER: Thank you very much. That was the last card that I have. Is there anyone else who wishes to make a statement at this time?

(No response.)

In that case, our notice said we would keep the hearing open for an hour so if anyone shows up and wants to make a statement within the next 20 minutes, they'll be able to do so. We'll go into recess though in the absence of any speakers. And we'll reconvene if any speakers appear or 2:00 to adjourn. Thank you very much.

It's now 2:00, no one else has appeared at this hearing to give a statement. We are

adjourned.

(At 2:00 p.m., the proceeding in the above-entitled matter was adjourned.)

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