

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Nancy Lange
Dan Lipschultz
Matthew Schuenger
Katie J. Sieben
John A. Tuma

Chair
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner

In the Matter of a Commission Inquiry into
the Service Quality, Customer Service, and
Billing Practices of Frontier Communications

ISSUE DATE: June 1, 2018

DOCKET NO. P-407, 405/CI-18-122

ORDER ON RECONSIDERATION

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On April 26, 2018, the Commission issued its Order Initiating Investigation and Referring Matter for Public Hearings (April Order). That order authorized public hearings regarding the service quality of Frontier Communications of Minnesota, Inc. and affiliate Citizens Telecommunications of MN, LLC (collectively, Frontier), and directed Frontier to prepare a notice of such hearings that would “clarify the limits of the Commission’s jurisdiction over internet service.”¹

On May 2, 2018, the Minnesota Department of Commerce petitioned for reconsideration or clarification regarding how to characterize the Commission’s jurisdiction over internet service.

By May 14, 2018, the Commission had received answers or replies from Frontier, the Minnesota Office of Attorney General, the Minnesota Telecom Alliance, and Qwest Corporation d/b/a CenturyLink QC.

On May 24, 2018, the matter came before the Commission.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

In its April Order, the Commission found it had authority to open this investigation under Minn. Stat. § 237.081. No party has disputed this finding.

Rather, the dispute arises from efforts to characterize the Commission’s jurisdiction over aspects of internet service. This is a contested topic. While the Commission does not want to mislead the public into believing the Commission has jurisdiction over matters that are solely within the province of federal entities, neither does the Commission want to erroneously disavow any aspect of the jurisdiction it does have over the goods and services that Frontier provides to its Minnesota customers.

¹ April Order, at 4.

Given the tension between these two objectives—and the fact that this dispute is arising in the context of drafting the language of a public notice—the Commission will resolve this matter by simply eliminating the requirement that the notice address the topic of the Commission’s jurisdiction over aspects of internet services. Parties will have the opportunity to address the extent of the Commission’s jurisdiction as the docket progresses.

ORDER

1. The Commission hereby modifies its Order Initiating Investigation and Referring Matter for Public Hearings (April 26, 2018) to eliminate the requirement that the notice of public hearings clarify the limits of the Commission’s jurisdiction over internet service.
2. This order shall become effective immediately.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Daniel P. Wolf
Executive Secretary



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