

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPLAINT FILED BY MARGARET FIGERT, MISSION, SOUTH DAKOTA, AGAINST U S WEST COMMUNICATIONS, INC. REGARDING POOR SERVICE AND A REQUEST TO HAVE LINES UPDATED)))))))	ORDER FOR AND NOTICE OF HEARING TC98-212
---	---------------------------------	---

On December 11, 1998, the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received a complaint filed by Margaret Figert, Mission, South Dakota (Complainant), against U S WEST Communications, Inc. (U S WEST), regarding poor service. Complainant outlines a series of frequent service outages, unreliable service, and poor quality of service. Complainant requests an upgrade in service or that the exchange be sold to Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc.

Pursuant to ARSD 20:10:01:08.01 and 20:10:01:09, if a complaint cannot be settled without formal action, the Commission shall determine if the complaint shows probable cause of an unlawful or unreasonable act, rate, practice or omission to go forward with the complaint.

On December 30, 1998, at a duly noticed meeting, the Commission considered this matter. The Commission voted unanimously to find probable cause.

The Commission has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapters 1-26, 49-2, 49-13, including 49-13-1 through 49-13-14, inclusive, and SDCL Chapter 49-31, including 49-31-3, 49-31-7, 49-31-7.1, 49-31-7.2, 49-31-10, 49-31-11, 49-31-38, 49-31-38.1, 49-31-38.2, 49-31-38.3, 49-31-60 through 49-31-68, inclusive, and ARSD 20:10:01:07.01 through 20:10:01:28, inclusive. The Commission may rely upon any or all of these or other laws of this state in making its determination.

A hearing shall be held on February 3, 1999, beginning at 1:30 o'clock P.M., at Cherry-Todd Electric Cooperative, West Highway 18, Mission, South Dakota. The Commission will also hear the complaints filed against U S WEST in dockets TC98-183, TC98-184, and TC98-199, since those complaints concern the same general area as this complaint. All persons testifying will be subject to cross-examination by the parties.

The issue at the hearing is whether U S WEST committed an unlawful or unreasonable act, rate, practice or omission and, if so, what relief would be appropriate.

The hearing shall be an adversary proceeding conducted pursuant to SDCL Chapter 1-26. All parties have the right to be present and to be represented by an attorney. These rights and other due process rights shall be forfeited if not exercised at the hearing. If you or your representative fail to appear at the time and place set for the hearing, the Final Decision will be based solely on the testimony and evidence provided, if any, during the hearing or a Final Decision may be issued by default pursuant to SDCL 1-26-20. After the hearing, the Commission will consider all evidence and testimony that was presented at the hearing. The Commission will then enter Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and a Final Decision regarding this matter. As a result of the hearing, the Commission shall determine whether U S

WEST committed an unlawful or unreasonable act, rate, practice, or omission and, if so, order any appropriate relief. The Commission's Final Decision may be appealed by the parties to the state Circuit Court and the state Supreme Court as provided by law. It is therefore

ORDERED that a hearing shall be held at the time and place specified above on the issue of whether U S WEST committed an unlawful or unreasonable act, rate, practice or omission and, if so, what relief would be appropriate.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, this hearing is being held in a physically accessible location. Please contact the Public Utilities Commission at 1-800-332-1782 at least 48 hours prior to the hearing if you have special needs so arrangements can be made to accommodate you.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 15th day of January, 1999.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, by facsimile or by first class mail, in properly addressed envelopes, with charges prepaid thereon.

**Commissioners Burg, Nelson and
Schoenfelder**

By: _____

WILLIAM BULLARD, JR.
Executive Director

Date: _____

(OFFICIAL SEAL)