

Resolution Concerning Wireless Consumer Complaints

WHEREAS, According to the FCC's Seventh Report to Congress over 128 million Americans subscribe to a wireless telecommunications service; and

WHEREAS, Consumer reliance upon wireless telephony as the primary source of telecommunications is steadily increasing; and

WHEREAS, Consumer complaints against wireless telecommunications carriers are increasing at both the FCC and at state commissions, even at those state commissions that do not currently have explicit regulatory authority over wireless carriers; and

WHEREAS, Billing and rate disputes account for 55% of the consumer complaints against wireless carriers filed with the FCC; and

WHEREAS, Consumers of wireless services tell staff at state commissions that they spend a significant amount of time and experience increasing frustration in attempting to resolve billing disputes and other complaints; and

WHEREAS, The FCC and state commissions recognize that state commissions may be in a good position to intervene and assist consumers in the resolution of complaints by working with wireless carriers; and

WHEREAS, A number of major wireless carriers, at the NARUC Summer Meetings in Portland, Oregon, in July 2002, agreed that wireless carriers should have an interest in, and in

fact are committed to, working cooperatively with state commissions and the FCC to resolve and minimize consumer complaints regarding wireless service; and

WHEREAS, The FCC has previously asked for comments on its Truth-in-Billing Docket No. 98-170 concerning whether truth-in-billing rules should be applied to the wireless industry, as they apply now to protect customers of wireline carriers; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), convened at its July 2002 Summer Meetings in Portland, Oregon, encourages wireless telecommunications carriers to hire and train its staff at sufficient levels to render adequate and satisfactory service to consumers; and be it further

RESOLVED, That NARUC directs the Committee on Consumer Affairs to pursue a study that would identify the extent and type of consumer complaints filed against wireless carriers; and be it further

RESOLVED, That NARUC directs the Staff Subcommittee on Consumer Affairs to explore options, with the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau of the FCC and the wireless industry, to facilitate speedy and fair resolution of wireless consumer complaints, including those received by state commissions; and be it further

RESOLVED, That NARUC encourages its member state commissions to file ex parte comments in FCC Docket No. 98-170 concerning the application of truth-in-billing rules to

wireless carriers.

Sponsored by the Committee on Consumer Affairs

Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors July 31, 2002