

**STATE OF MINNESOTA**

**BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

Katie Sieben  
Joseph K. Sullivan  
Valerie Means  
Matt Schuerger  
John Tuma

Chair  
Vice Chair  
Commissioner  
Commissioner  
Commissioner

**In the Matter of a Petition for a Rulemaking  
Regarding Minnesota Rules Chapter 7810**

**Docket No. P421/M-21-381**

**COMMENTS OF  
FRONTIER COMMUNICATIONS OF MINNESOTA, INC. and  
CITIZENS TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY OF MINNESOTA, LLC**

On June 11, 2021, the Commission issued a *Notice of Comment Period* in this docket inviting comment on the several topics related to CenturyLink’s petition for rulemaking to eliminate, amend or modify certain landline telephone service rules under Minn. Rules Ch. 7810 Telephone Utility; specifically, Minn. Rules 7810.5200 Answering Time and 7810.5800 Interruptions of Service.

Citizens Telecommunications Company of Minnesota, LLC and Frontier Communications of Minnesota, Inc. (collectively, “Frontier”) support CenturyLink’s request for a rulemaking. The issues and concerns raised in the petition merit further examination by the Commission. In general, Frontier’s experiences and the impacts on its operations arising from these two rules are similar to that described by CenturyLink.

Regarding Rule 7810.5200 Answering Time, Frontier also offers its customers various avenues to contact the company other than by telephone. CenturyLink’s comparison of the Commission’s rule on answering time for monopoly electric companies to the Commission’s rule for local exchange carriers is interesting. The Commission’s rules impose a more stringent requirement for answering time upon local exchange carriers operating in a competitive environment than they do upon monopoly electric companies. Frontier questions the rationale for continuing that approach in today’s telecommunications marketplace.

Regarding Rule 7810.5800 Interruptions of Service, Frontier also experiences the same demand to prioritize voice service over broadband service in order to comply with the Commission rule. The company is forced to do so, even though customers are often more anxious to have their broadband service than their telephone service. The result of the current rule is that installation and repair of broadband service often takes a backseat to satisfying the stringent repair requirements for voice service.

The Commission specifically sought comment regarding certain topics related to the filing, and Frontier offers the following comments on those topics.

### **Is a rulemaking necessary to address CenturyLink's concerns**

The issues which CenturyLink raises in its filing focus on the propriety of the current rules, which were written in the context of a monopoly telephone market, for today's competitive market for telecommunications services. Local exchange carriers in the state are operating in a market where customers have alternatives for their communications needs beyond local exchange service. Hence, the issues that CenturyLink raises impact all local exchange carriers in Minnesota. Since the Commission's rules govern all local exchange carriers, a rulemaking would be an appropriate avenue to address this topic, as all local exchange carriers are impacted.

### **How does CenturyLink's petition comport with Minn. Administrative Rules**

Part 1400.2040 of Minnesota's administrative rules specifies the content of a petition for rulemaking. CenturyLink's petition in this docket meets the requirements outlined in Part 1400.2040. Part 1400.2500 of Minnesota's administrative rules offers a recommended format for a petition for rulemaking. The content of Part 1400.2500 is described as a recommendation rather than a requirement, but CenturyLink's petition conforms to the content of Part 1400.2500.

### **What should be the scope of any rulemaking proceeding**

CenturyLink's petition is limited to review of two specific rules, 7810,5200 and 7810.5800. The scope of a rulemaking docket should be limited to examination of just those two rules.

**What procedures should the Commission establish for any rulemaking proceeding**

Frontier suggests that the Commission seek an additional round of comments and reply comments from parties, to focus on the specific changes to the two rules that parties would suggest.

**What additional information and analysis should the Commission seek**

As part of the additional round of comments mentioned above, the Commission should solicit information regarding what other states have in place for rules on these two items (answer time and out of service restoral) and, in particular, the rules for neighboring states. This information would allow the Commission to assess how its rules compare with the larger regulatory approach in the current telecommunications market.

**Should the Commission approve or deny CenturyLink’s petition for rulemaking**

Frontier urges the Commission to approve CenturyLink’s petition for rulemaking. Frontier believes that modification of these rules is appropriate at this time, in light of the current status of the telecommunications marketplace.

**Are there other issues or concerns related to this matter**

Frontier does not have any additional issues to raise at this time.

Dated June 28, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

FRONTIER COMMUNICATIONS OF MINNESOTA, INC.

CITIZENS TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY OF MINNESOTA, LLC

*/s/ Scott Bohler*

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