



The VON Coalition

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## VoIP Leaders Praise FCC for Answering the Call for Voice Competition

**Background:** On April 10, 2006, the VON Coalition asked the FCC to grant a Time Warner petition to clarify that voice traffic can be exchanged between broadband and telephone networks – a key requirement for enabling VoIP consumers to talk with their analog counterparts and visa versa. Today the FCC granted the Time Warner petition affirming that competitive local exchange carriers (“CLECs”) are entitled to interconnect with incumbent local exchange carriers (“ILECs”) pursuant to section 251 of the Telecommunications Act for the purpose of exchanging traffic on behalf of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)-based service providers.

The following statement can be attributed to Staci Pies, President of the VON Coalition.

*“The VON Coalition applauds today’s FCC decision to answer the call for voice competition by ensuring that voice traffic can be exchanged between broadband and telephone networks. The FCC was right to find that states cannot unilaterally twist the meaning of the Telecom Act to hang up on broadband enabled voice competition. Today’s decision helps ensure that millions more American consumers can take advantage of power and potential of Internet based communications.*”

*The problems that Time Warner faced in South Carolina and Nebraska were not isolated, they threatened the competitive availability of VoIP services overall, and they effectively created “digital divides” between those Americans who can enjoy the full potential of broadband and those who cannot. The FCC’s decision recognizes that every American, regardless of where they live, ought to be able to take advantage of the opportunities created by cutting edge broadband enabled voice services.*”

*With the right public policies, VoIP competition can deliver new competition, lower prices, and improved ways to communicate. In fact, as barriers to VoIP competition are removed, VoIP competition is projected to save consumers an astonishing \$100 billion over the next 5 years.”*

### **About the VON Coalition:**

The Voice on the Net or VON Coalition consists of leading VoIP companies, on the cutting edge of developing and delivering voice innovations over Internet. The coalition, which includes AccessLine, AT&T, BMX, BT Americas, CallSmart, Cisco, Convedia, Covad, EarthLink, Google, iBasis, i3 Voice and Data, Intel, Intrado, Microsoft, New Global Telecom, Openwave, Pandora Networks, PointOne, Pulver.com, Skype, Switch Business Solutions, T-Mobile USA, United Online, USA Datanet, VocalData, Veraz Networks, and Yahoo! works to advance regulatory policies that enable Americans to take advantage of the full promise and potential of VoIP. The Coalition believes that with the right public policies, Internet based voice advances can make talking more affordable, businesses more productive, jobs more plentiful, the Internet more valuable, and Americans more safe and secure. Since its inception, the VON Coalition has promoted pragmatic policy choices for unleashing VoIP’s potential. More information about the VON Coalition can be obtained at the following website:

<http://www.von.org>