



Voice on the Net Coalition

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May 26, 2010

By Fax (303-866-2003)

The Honorable Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor
136 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203-1792

Re: House Bill 10-1281

Dear Governor Ritter:

The Voice on the Net (VON) Coalition, which represents the nation's leading companies developing and delivering voice innovations over the Internet, respectfully submits these comments concerning House Bill 10-1281, an Act Concerning the Deregulation of Telecommunications Service in Areas Where Sufficient Market Competition Exists, which would amend Section 40-15 of the Colorado Revised Statutes by adding new paragraph 401. Specifically, in order to ensure that consumers can take full advantage of the power and potential that Internet communications can deliver, VON supports the prohibition on state regulation of Interconnected Voice over Internet Protocol ("VoIP") service. With this new law, Colorado consumers will benefit from the lower prices and robust services promised by Internet Protocol communications technologies, and the State of Colorado will benefit from additional investment in the broadband infrastructure that is necessary to deliver these innovative products and services.

VoIP can be a force for increased competition, a platform for innovation, a driver for broadband deployment and a vehicle for continued economic growth. In fact, with the right policies, VoIP competition can save Colorado consumers millions of dollars annually – putting real money back into consumers' pockets when they really need it. Further, by harnessing VoIP as a broadband driver (since VoIP calls are carried over broadband connections), increased broadband adoption in Colorado will create jobs as the country works its way out of these difficult economic times.

To help ensure that Colorado consumers can benefit from these transformative Internet services, new paragraph 401 of Section 40-15 of the Colorado Revised Statutes would exempt interconnected VoIP from regulation under this section or under the Public Utilities Law of the State of Colorado. By adopting this provision, Colorado would join policymakers at both the federal and state level that have recognized that to unleash the vast benefits that VoIP can deliver, the service should not be subject to a potential patchwork of conflicting state regulatory models. The provision is particularly important for consumers living in rural Colorado who have yet to enjoy the benefits of broadband and voice competition.

Rather than adopting state-specific rules for VoIP, government leaders in states like California, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, New Jersey and Virginia have all taken steps to prevent state regulation of VoIP in order to boost broadband deployment, make phone service more affordable, and harness VoIP's vast potential for important public policy



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goals. We encourage you to follow suit and adopt House Bill 10-1281 prohibiting state regulation of VoIP service.

Please feel free to contact me directly if you or any of your staff have questions or would like to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

The VON Coalition

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Glenn Richards", written over a horizontal line.

Glenn S. Richards
Executive Director
202-663-8215 (phone)
Glenn.richards@pillsburylaw.com (email)

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 the Internet. The coalition, which includes AT&T, Broadvox, Cisco, Google, iBasis, Microsoft, New Global Telecom, Skype, T-Mobile USA, Vonage 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. <http://www.von.org>