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ALTS PRAISES FCC COLLOCATION ACTIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C., AUGUST 10, 2000 -- The Association for Local Telecommunications Services (ALTS), the leading national organization representing facilities-based competitive local exchange carriers (CLECs), today praised the FCC for taking several steps needed to ensure that CLECs have timely and cost-effective access to incumbent LEC facilities.

The FCC adopted an Order on Reconsideration, which should strengthen the FCC's existing collocation rules, and adopted a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking addressing additional issues surrounding CLEC ability to collocate and otherwise interconnect with ILEC networks.

"The FCC fully understands the importance of nondiscriminatory access to telecommunications networks, and has taken necessary steps to ensure that access to competitive carriers," said John D. Windhausen, Jr., President of ALTS. "It should become quicker and more cost effective for CLECS to gain access to ILEC facilities. This is good for competition and great for consumers."

The FCC has requested public comment on issues stemming from the D. C. Circuit Court remand last March of the FCC Collocation Order. In that remand order, the D. C. Circuit asked the FCC to clarify what equipment is necessary for CLECs to collocate in ILEC offices.

"We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the issues remanded to the FCC by the D. C. Circuit," said Jonathan Askin, General Counsel of ALTS. "It's clear that the FCC has devoted a lot of brainpower to the remand issues. We're confident the FCC will take the necessary action to guarantee CLEC access to ILEC facilities including nondiscriminatory access to next-generation architecture and to consumers served by remote terminals."

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Askin cited the August 1 Consent Decree with GTE as an example of the Commission's willingness to promote competition. In that Decree, GTE agreed to pay \$2.7 million dollars for its failure to abide by the FCC's collocation rules and its failure to allow CLECs nondiscriminatory access to the network.

"We believe this is a strong indication that the FCC considers collocation a vital tool to ensure competitive access to the network," Askin said. "We trust that the FCC, via the Common Carrier Bureau's review of the collocation remand and the Enforcement Bureau's efforts to ensure compliance with FCC rules, will do what is necessary to allow CLECs timely and cost-efficient access to the network."

ALTS is the leading national industry association whose mission is to promote facilities-based local telecommunications competition. Created in 1987, ALTS has offices in Washington, D.C. and Irvine, California and now represents more than 200 companies that build, own, and operate competitive local networks. For more information on ALTS, contact Crawford Public Relations at 703-318-5460 or visit www.alts.org.

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