

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

In the Matter of the Application for Approval of an)
Amendment to an Interconnection Agreement by)
and between Southwestern Bell Telephone, L.P.,)
d/b/a AT&T Missouri, and Birch Telecom of Missouri,)
Inc., and Ionex Communications, Inc.)

Case No. TK-2007-0019

ORDER APPROVING AMENDMENT
TO INTERCONNECTION AGREEMENT

Issue Date: August 22, 2006

Effective Date: September 1, 2006

This order approves the amendment to the interconnection agreement between the parties filed by Southwestern Bell Telephone, L.P., d/b/a AT&T Missouri.

On July 11, 2006, AT&T Missouri filed an application with the Commission for approval of an amendment to its interconnection agreement with Birch Telecom of Missouri, Inc., and Ionex Communications, Inc. (collectively, Birch). AT&T Missouri and Birch currently have a Commission-approved interconnection agreement between them. In the current application, the parties have agreed to amend the agreement. The amendment was filed pursuant to Section 252(e)(1) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.¹ Both AT&T Missouri and Birch hold certificates of service authority to provide basic local exchange telecommunications services in Missouri.

¹ See 47 U.S.C. § 251, *et seq.*

Although Birch is a party to the amendment, it did not join in the application. On July 13, 2006, the Commission issued an order making Birch a party in this case and directing any party wishing to request a hearing to do so no later than August 2, 2006.

Under Section 252(e) of the Act, any interconnection agreement adopted by negotiation must be submitted to the Commission for approval. The Commission may reject an agreement if it finds that the agreement is discriminatory or that it is not consistent with the public interest, convenience and necessity.

On August 10, 2006, the Staff of the Commission filed a memorandum and recommendation. The Staff memorandum recommends that the amendment to the agreement be approved and notes that the terms of the amendment meet the limited requirements of the Act in that the amendment is not discriminatory toward nonparties and is not against the public interest. Staff recommends that the Commission direct the parties to submit any further amendments to the Commission for approval.

Findings of Fact

The Missouri Public Service Commission, having considered all of the competent and substantial evidence upon the whole record, makes the following findings of fact.

The Commission has considered the application, the supporting documentation, and Staff's verified recommendation, which are hereby admitted into evidence. Based upon that review, the Commission concludes that the interconnection agreement as amended meets the requirements of the Act in that it does not discriminate against a nonparty carrier and implementation of the agreement as amended is not inconsistent with the public interest, convenience and necessity. The Commission finds that approval of the

agreement as amended shall be conditioned upon the parties submitting any further amendments to the Commission for approval pursuant to the procedure set out below.

Amendment Procedure

The Commission has a duty to review all interconnection agreements, whether arrived at through negotiation or arbitration, as mandated by the Act.² In order for the Commission's role of review and approval to be effective, the Commission must also review and approve or recognize amendments to these agreements. The Commission has a further duty to make a copy of every interconnection agreement available for public inspection.³ This duty is in keeping with the Commission's practice under its own rules of requiring telecommunications companies to keep their rate schedules on file with the Commission.⁴

The parties to each interconnection agreement must maintain a complete and current copy of the agreement, together with all amendments, in the Commission's offices. Any proposed amendment must be submitted pursuant to Commission rule 4 CSR 240-3.513(6).

Conclusions of Law

The Missouri Public Service Commission has arrived at the following conclusions of law.

² 47 U.S.C. § 252.

³ 47 U.S.C. § 252(h).

⁴ 4 CSR 240-3.545.

The Commission, under the provisions of Section 252(e)(1) of the federal Telecommunications Act of 1996,⁵ is required to review negotiated interconnection agreements. It may only reject a negotiated agreement upon a finding that its implementation would be discriminatory to a nonparty or inconsistent with the public interest, convenience and necessity.⁶ Based upon its review of the amendment to the interconnection agreement between AT&T Missouri and Birch and its findings of fact, the Commission concludes that the agreement as amended is neither discriminatory nor inconsistent with the public interest and shall be approved.

The Commission notes that prior to providing telecommunications services in Missouri, a party shall possess the following: (1) an interconnection agreement approved by the Commission; (2) except for wireless providers, a certificate of service authority from the Commission to provide interexchange or basic local telecommunications services; and (3) except for wireless providers, a tariff approved by the Commission.

IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. The amendment to the interconnection agreement between Southwestern Bell Telephone, L.P., d/b/a AT&T Missouri, and Birch Telecom of Missouri, Inc., and Ionex Communications, Inc., filed on July 11, 2006, is approved.

2. Any further changes or amendments to the interconnection agreement shall be submitted in compliance with 4 CSR 240-3.513(6).

⁵ 47 U.S.C. § 252(e)(1).

⁶ 47 U.S.C. § 252(e)(2)(A).

3. This order shall become effective on September 1, 2006.
4. This case may be closed on September 2, 2006.

BY THE COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colleen M. Dale', written over a horizontal line.

Colleen M. Dale
Secretary

(S E A L)

Nancy Dippell, Deputy Chief Regulatory
Law Judge, by delegation of authority
pursuant to Section 386.240, RSMo 2000.

Dated at Jefferson City, Missouri,
on this 22nd day of August, 2006.