

Approved: February 24, 2000
Date

MINUTES OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION MANAGEMENT.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Jim Morrison at 3:30 p.m. on February 15, 2000 in Room 526-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except Representatives Dean and Farmer, who were excused.

Committee staff present:

Robert Nugent, Revisor of Statutes' Office
Gary Deeter, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Doug Lawrence, Consultant, Southwestern Bell Telephone
John Federico, Consultant, Kansas Cable Telecommunications Association

Others attending: See Attached List

The minutes for February 8, 2000, were unanimously approved as amended. (Motion, Representative McKinney, second, Representative Krehbiel.) The Chair announced that **HB 2743** had been separately rereferred to the Select Committee on Information Management and the House Appropriations Committee. The Chair again requested opponents of the bill to provide wording to make the bill more acceptable to them. The Chair noted a letter from Sprint stating insufficient demand for advanced services in their service area (Attachment 1) and a letter from Kansas Cable Telecommunications Association expressing reluctance

Members discussed Attachment 2, a summary by Southwestern Bell of Texas Senate Bill 560. Representative Krehbiel said the bill provides a strong policy statement of universal access to broadband services at a reasonable cost, directing the Texas Corporation Commission to assure availability of advanced telecommunications services to anyone within the state. Representative Holmes noted that the Kansas Telecommunications Act of 1996 stipulates similar access. He said the 1996 act allows the gatekeeping role of the Kansas Corporation Commission to expire July 1, 2001, but the mandate to provide advanced services does not expire.

Further discussion regarding **HB 2743** considered whether or not to make the term DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) more generic, such as "broadband." Doug Lawrence, Consultant for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company, noted that the term broadband is defined as 1.5 megabytes per second, which is above the threshold of ISDN lines. Members said **HB 2743** simply added DSL to the list of advanced services. Members agreed that the purpose of the bill is and should be to encourage wider and more timely deployment of all broadband services. Mr. Lawrence reminded members that Southwestern Bell (SWB) was committed to providing such services to 83% of their customers within 3 years. Members renewed their concern about SWB's seeming reluctance to provide access to all their customers in a more timely manner. Members noted SWB's parent company SBC spends billions on mergers but seems hesitant to invest more money in SWB's own service area.

Members discussed the potential of interconnectivity between cable television services and

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telephone lines. John Federico, consultant for cable services, said some cable companies are providing broadband services to schools and libraries, services which also have interconnects to small rural telephone companies. (Attachment 3) Members wondered why cable could not partner with Southwestern Bell or rural telephone companies to speed deployment of advanced services. Mr. Lawrence said that SWB is required to give access to its competitors.

Representative McKinney requested staff to prepare an amendment would encourage DSL or technology of equal or greater quality. He further noted that to date there have been no requests for funding from the Kansas Universal Service Fund for deployment of DSL or other advanced services. Representative Krehbiel noted that at the February 8 meeting the Chair requested opponents to provide amendments that would make the bill acceptable to them, and no amendments were presented at today's meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:14 p.m. **The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 22 at 3:30 p.m. in Room 526-S. The Chair proposed further discussion on HB 2743.**