

BEFORE

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

In the Matter of the Application of Verizon)
 North Inc. for Approval to Revise its General) Case No. 04-1677-TP-SLF
 Exchange Tariff, PUCO No. 7, to Implement)
 a Late Payment Charge.)

ENTRY

The Commission finds:

- (1) On November 4, 2004, as amended on December 1, 2004, Verizon North Inc. (Verizon North or company) filed an application for approval to revise its General Exchange Tariff, PUCO No. 7, to implement a late payment charge. The application was originally filed as an ATA and was subsequently amended at the request of the Commission staff (staff).

Pursuant to Verizon North's application, residential customers with an outstanding balance of \$30.00 or more would incur an additional charge of \$5.00 or 1.5 percent of their outstanding balance, whichever is higher. Business customers would incur an additional \$10.00 fee or 1.5 percent of their outstanding balance, whichever is higher, in the event that their monthly bill is not paid in full.

In support of its application, Verizon North states that all major incumbent local exchange companies and competitive local exchange companies have a late payment charge and that such charges are commonly used in every business segment in the country. Verizon North explains that a late payment charge provides an incentive for customers to pay bills in a timely fashion. The company notes that, in the event subscribers do not pay their bills in a timely fashion, Verizon North must still meet its obligations and, therefore, will be required to divert funds to cover the missed bill payments. Verizon North represents that its uncollected amounts are dramatically increasing, and will continue to do so absent a late payment charge.

- (2) On November 16, 2004, the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) filed a motion to intervene and a motion to dismiss, or in the alternative, motion for hearing relative to Verizon North's request for a late payment charge. On December 1, 2004, Verizon North filed its memorandum contra OCC's motion. On December 8, 2004, OCC filed its reply memorandum.

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- (3) On March 1, 2005, Verizon North filed a motion to voluntarily dismiss its application without prejudice.
- (4) Verizon North's motion is reasonable and should be granted. Therefore, Verizon North's application is dismissed without prejudice. In light of Verizon North's motion to dismiss, OCC's motions are now moot.

It is, therefore,

ORDERED, That Verizon North's application is dismissed without prejudice, consistent with Finding (4). It is, further,

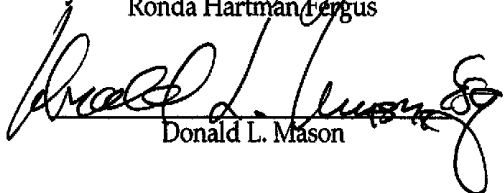
ORDERED, That a copy of this Entry be served upon all parties and interested persons of record.

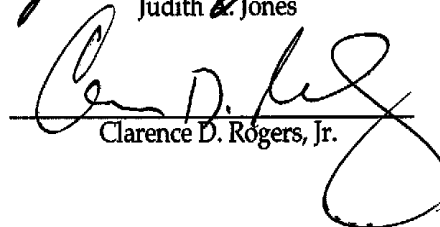
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO


Alan R. Schriber, Chairman


Ronda Hartman Fergus

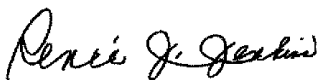

Judith G. Jones


Donald L. Mason


Clarence D. Rogers, Jr.

JSA;geb

Entered in the Journal
MAR 09 2005



Renee J. Jenkins
Secretary