

**GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

Commissioners:  
Mac Barber, Chairman  
Dave Baker  
Bobby Baker  
Bob Durden  
Stan Wise

***NEWS RELEASE*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:****March 23, 1998**

CONTACT: Shawn Davis  
Public Information Office  
(404) 656-6558 or 1-800-282-5813

---

**GEORGIA COMMUNITIES TO RECEIVE GREATER TOLL-FREE CALLING AREAS**

ATLANTA -- The Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC) voted Friday to implement more toll-free calling routes throughout Georgia. The PSC approved seven more toll-free routes after sending out ballots to sixteen communities seeking public opinion on whether to raise basic service rates to call nearby communities toll-free.

Legislation passed last year by the General Assembly in House Bill 888 calls for the PSC to implement toll-free calling between communities where the central telephone offices' are twenty-two (22) miles or less apart.

"The seven routes approved Friday were greater than 22 miles apart, but special consideration was given as a courtesy to area legislators," said Public Service Commissioner Bobby Baker. "Citizens in these communities should have the benefit of toll-free calling between each other by June," he added.

While consumers will now be able to call nearby communities toll-free, an increase in basic service rates may be necessary to compensate local telephone companies for the loss of toll revenue. Ballots were sent asking citizens to weigh the benefit of toll-free calling against the expected increase in basic service rates. The PSC considers whether to approve the extended toll-free route based on the ballots returned to the Commission.

The telephone exchanges involved in this round of expanded toll-free calling are listed below. The PSC voted to disapprove routes where the majority of ballots returned did not favor the measure.

Abbeville to Cordele - Disapproved;

Alapaha to Lakeland - Disapproved;

Albany to Ashburn - Approved;

Albany to Parrot - Approved;

Ashburn to Fitzgerald - Approved;

Ashburn to Ocilla - Approved;

Lakeland to Sparks - Disapproved;

Lakeland to Pearson - Disapproved;

Macon to Perry - Approved;

Nashville to Tifton - Approved;

Nashville to Valdosta - Approved.

# # #