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12-04

News Release

PSC Chairman Doug Everett Calls for Rule Changes to Improve Telecommunications Customer Service

Atlanta, July 26, 2004 — Doug Everett, Chairman of the Georgia Public Service Commission (Commission), is urging the Commission to adopt rules to improve the quality of customer service offered by telecommunications companies. Everett says telecommunications companies offering bundled services, such as local residential and business, wireless, and/or broadband in one package, should provide one call customer service for all the services. For example, if a customer with residential and wireless service from the same provider calls to complain about service on their residential service they should also be able to receive customer service on their wireless service. “Customers with bundled services owned by the same parent company should not be shuttled back and forth between the different customer service representatives when a problem occurs,” Chairman Everett said. “I have seen this happen and it is not right. The telecommunications company should be the one who communicates with the bundled company. I know that this might require new software between the bundled companies in their customer service department but it has the potential to speed up service for the consumer and reduce the time the consumer has to spend on the phone in seeking service.”

Everett also wants the Commission to adopt rules to shorten the required time a telecommunications provider has to put a live customer service representative in touch with the consumer. Everett says, “Due to the competitive nature of today’s telecommunications industry, the quality of customer service from telecommunications providers has decreased. This proposal would see that customers get to a real human quicker instead of being routed through layers of automated telephone menus.”

Chairman Everett is serving his first term on the Commission. He was elected in 2002. The five-member Commission is responsible for the regulation of electric and natural gas utilities and telecommunications providers. The Commission also enforces federal and state natural gas pipeline safety regulations and the state’s underground utility facilities protection laws.

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