

LECs and third parties. (2) Does providing access to network elements other than access to vertical features of unbundled switches implicate intellectual property rights of equipment vendors or other third parties? Why or why not? (3) Does providing access to services for resale, in accordance with section 251, implicate intellectual property rights of equipment vendors or other third parties? Why or why not? (4) What are the potential burdens on requesting telecommunications carriers if they are required to independently negotiate licensing agreements with equipment vendors or other third parties before obtaining access to unbundled network elements? Are there ways to eliminate or reduce those burdens on requesting telecommunications carriers? In addition, we encourage parties to comment on MCI's proposal that incumbent LECs bear the burden of negotiating any extension or augmentation of intellectual property rights that might be implicated in interconnection agreements.

Interested parties should file comments on MCI's petition by April 15, 1997, and reply comments by May 6, 1997, with the Secretary, FCC, 1919 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554. A copy should also be sent to Janice Myles, Common Carrier Bureau, FCC, Room 544, 1919 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554, and to the Commission's contractor for public service records duplication, ITS, Inc., 2100 M Street, N.W., Suite 140, Washington, D.C. 20037. Parties filing comments should include the Policy Division internal reference number, CCBPol 97-4, as well as the docket number, CC Docket No. 96-98, on their pleadings. MCI's petition is available for inspection and copying during regular business hours in the FCC Reference Center, Room 239, 1919 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554, as well as in

the Common Carrier Bureau's Public Reference Room, Room 575, 2000 M Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20554. Copies can also be obtained from ITS by calling (202) 857-3800. Comments and reply comments must include a short and concise summary of the substantive arguments raised in the pleading.

We will treat this proceeding as non-restricted for purposes of the Commission's *ex parte* rules. See generally 47 CFR §§ 1.1200-1.1216. Parties may not file more than a total of ten (10) pages of *ex parte* submissions, excluding cover letters. This ten-page limit does not include: (1) written *ex parte* filings made solely to disclose an oral *ex parte* contract; (2) written material submitted at the time of an oral presentation to Commission staff that provides a brief outline of the presentation; or (3) written material filed in response to direct requests from Commission staff. *Ex parte* filings in excess of this limit will not be considered as part of the record in this proceeding.

Federal Communications Commission

**William F. Caton,**

*Acting Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 97-7527 Filed 3-21-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712-01-P

#### **47 CFR Parts 25, 26, 73, 76 and 100**

[MM Docket No. 95-176; DA 97-568]

#### **Closed Captioning of Video Programming**

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule; extension of reply comment period.

**SUMMARY:** This *Order* extends the period for the public to file reply comments in this rulemaking from March 24, 1997 until March 31, 1997. This action will allow the public to more adequately

reply to comments previously filed in response to the *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* ("NPRM") seeking comment on proposed rules for the closed captioning of video programming.

**DATES:** Reply comments are now due on or before March 31, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Federal Communications Commission, Washington, DC 20554.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Marcia Glauber, John Adams or Alexis Johns, Cable Services Bureau, (202) 418-7200, TTY (202) 418-7172.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** By this *Order*, we extend the time period for filing reply comments in this docket until March 31, 1997. Section 305 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 ("1996 Act") added a new Section 713, Video Programming Accessibility, to the Communications Act of 1934, as amended ("Communications Act"). Section 713 requires the Commission to prescribe, by August 8, 1997, rules and implementation schedules for the closed captioning of video programming. On January 9, 1997, the Commission adopted a *NPRM*, summarized at 62 FR 4959 (February 3, 1997), in this docket, seeking comment on proposed rules, implementation schedules and exemptions as authorized by Congress in Section 713. The *NPRM* established March 24, 1997, as the deadline for filing reply comments.

This action is taken pursuant to authority found in Sections 4(i), 303(r) and 713 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 154(i), 303(r) and 613.

Federal Communications Commission

**Meredith J. Jones,**

*Chief, Cable Services Bureau.*

[FR Doc. 97-7321 Filed 3-21-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712-01-P