

STATE NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED

to control over the electric utility systems exercised by large companies.

Legislatures, Brown explained, hope to address that problem with restructuring proposals. Such efforts are complex and must take into account a variety of considerations. Three states — California, Rhode Island and New Hampshire — have passed legislation imposing restructuring plans, while other states, such as Washington, Illinois, Michigan and Pennsylvania, have implemented pilot programs to test the effects of restructuring.

It is impossible, Brown said, to provide a specific outline of the ideal restructuring plan. A pilot program in Rhode Island, he explained, was only "slightly representative" of what might occur in other parts of the country. Brown noted, for example, that the Rhode Island program, which led to a 10 to 20 percent reduction in the cost of electricity, involved a voluntary and sophisticated customer base, saw suppliers focus their efforts on gaining experience in a new market environment and saw some of those suppliers lose money.

The notable finding in that experiment, Brown said, was the determination of so-called strandable costs, the cost of producing electric power which will never be eliminated. That, he said, accounts for nearly 40 percent of the cost of one kilowatt hour of electricity.

Determining strandable costs, Brown emphasized, is a key issue in the writing of electric utility restructuring legislation. In states which have implemented such legislation, Brown explained, special emphasis was placed on determining and specifically limiting those costs to expenses accrued in the production of electric power.

—SHAWN ASHLEY
10/15/96

"It is undoubtedly the business of ministers very much to consult the inclinations of the people, but they ought to take great care that they do not receive that inclination from the few persons who may happen to approach them."

Edmund Burke
Letters on a Regicide Peace
1796-97

CORPORATION COMMISSION SEEKS INPUT ON TELEPHONE SERVICES AND COMPETITION

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) The Oklahoma Corporation Commission issued two notices of inquiry this week relating to telephone service in Oklahoma. PUD960000305 seeks comments on services offered by local-exchange telephone companies and PUD960000306 seeks to generate ideas and options for local-exchange competition in areas that may not be profitable.

Copies of the notices of inquiry explaining the comment procedure are available at no cost in the office of the Commission Clerk. The notices (PUD960000305 and PUD960000306) will be posted this week on the commission's electronic bulletin board (405-522-2622) and on the Internet at <http://www.occ.state.ok.us>.

For PUD960000305, the Commission is asking for comments on whether local-exchange telephone companies should be required to expedite the offering of advanced-technology custom-calling services such as caller ID, call tracing and automatic callback.

The notice of inquiry invites comment on what custom-calling features should be offered, whether the Corporation Commission has the authority to require statewide availability of such features, and how telephone companies might recover the cost of new investment required to provide the custom-calling features.

The notice also invites comment on whether requiring uniformity of custom-calling features is in the public interest and what effect such a requirement might have on local-exchange competition.

Comments in response to this notice of inquiry will be accepted through October 22.

A conference to discuss comments received will be held at 9:30 a.m., Oct. 24, in Room 301 of the Jim Thorpe Bldg. Reply comments will be accepted through Nov. 5.

Boosting Local Phone Competition

Notice PUD960000306 seeks to generate ideas and identify options to encourage local-exchange telephone competition in areas that competitive service providers may not consider profitable.

"In areas where telecommunications service providers do not believe sufficient revenues will be generated, competitive local-exchange providers, unless otherwise encouraged, are less likely to offer service, or

will offer service only after profitable locations have been supplied," the notice says.

Suggestions from the public, local governing bodies and private industry are solicited as to what incentives might attract competitive service to possibly non-profitable areas. Comments on the possibility of providing subsidies are also encouraged.

Comments in response to this notice of inquiry will be accepted through October 25.

A conference to discuss comments received will be held at 10 a.m., Nov. 7, in Room 301 of the Jim Thorpe Bldg. Reply comments will be accepted through Nov. 14.

—OKLA. CORPORATION COMMISSION
10/15/96

WILDLIFE

RUMOR MILL WORKING OVERTIME ON MOUNTAIN LIONS

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) Every year rumors that the Wildlife Department is stocking mountain lions circulate through coffee shops and cafes in rural Oklahoma. That is simply not true, according to Department officials.

"We have never stocked mountain lions anywhere in Oklahoma, not even a single cat," said Greg Duffy, director of the Department. "The latest rumors of mountain lion stocking have been coming from the west-central part of the state. State Senator Bruce Price from Hinton has received a number of calls on the subject and recently contacted us for more information. That tells me there probably are a lot of people talking about mountain lion stocking."

"Oklahoma doesn't contain very much suitable mountain lion habitat," he said. "Undoubtedly, a few wild cats travel into the state from neighboring Colorado, New Mexico and Texas. More often than not, however, people who see mountain lions are seeing animals which were once pets."

Mountain lions, which are protected by state law, may not be hunted or killed. Anyone with concerns about mountain lions should contact their county game warden or game biologist.

—OKLA. DEPT. OF WILDLIFE
10/15/96

"People say law but they mean wealth"

Emerson, "Journals," 1841