



March 23, 2004

Tina M. Pidgeon
(202) 457-8812
tpidgeon@gci.com

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

RECEIVED

MAR 23 2004

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Received

MAR 25 2004

Policy Branch
International Bureau

Re: Request to Withdraw Petition for Waiver
SAT-WAV-19980803-00061

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On August 3, 1998, General Communication, Inc. (GCI) filed a Petition for Waiver, which was assigned the above-referenced file number. By the Petition, GCI sought to extend a waiver previously granted in 1996, which waiver permitted GCI to construct and operate earth station facilities in approximately 50 bush communities for the purpose of offering competitive, facilities-based message telephone service (MTS).¹ In the absence of the waiver, such deployment was prohibited under the "Alaska Bush Policy", adopted in 1984, which precluded installing or operating more than one satellite earth station in any Alaska Bush community for interstate MTS.² Since initial grant of the limited waiver of this policy in 1996, GCI has continued to operate the subject earth station facilities under successive grants of special temporary authority.

On August 12, 2003, the Commission repealed the Alaska Bush Policy, stating that "allowing facilities-based competition of interstate MTS in Alaska Bush communities will encourage improvement in the quality of service available in those communities, promote more efficient delivery of service, and reduce the incentives for overcharging for use of these facilities."³ As a result, GCI is in the process of securing standard earth station authorizations for each of these sites, for which a waiver is no longer required. Because the matter before the Commission in the Petition for Waiver has been resolved by the *August 2003 Order*, GCI respectfully requests withdrawal of the 1998 Petition for Waiver.

¹ *Petition of General Communication, Inc. for a Partial Waiver of the Bush Earth Station Policy, Memorandum Opinion and Order*, 11 FCC Rcd 2535 (Int'l Bur. 1996).

² *See Policies Governing the Ownership and Operation of Domestic Satellite Earth Stations in the Bush Communities in Alaska, Final Decision*, 96 FCC 2d 522 (1984).

³ *Policy for Licensing Domestic Satellite Earth Stations in the Bush Communities of Alaska*, IB Docket No. 02-30; RM No. 7246, *Report and Order*, FCC 03-197 (Aug. 12, 2003) at ¶ 1 (*August 2003 Order*).

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch

March 23, 2004

Page 2 of 2

Please date-stamp the enclosed copy as received and return it with our messenger. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,



Tina M. Pidgeon

Vice President, Federal Regulatory Affairs

cc: Frank Peace
International Bureau
via facsimile