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Statement by David K. Easlick,

AT&T Vice President

Washington, D. C.

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Speaking for AT&T and the Bell System telephone companies, we feel all parties should be pleased with this agreement. We see it as our best route to further progress in equal employment opportunity.

It is good to clear the air in this way. It is good to arrive at a more precise understanding of what the law requires in the equal employment opportunity field, and to be able to strengthen our Affirmative Action Programs in line with this understanding.

Through the past decade we in the Bell System companies have been working hard to provide equal employment opportunity. At no point did we feel we had arrived in this endeavor, but we have made substantial progress, particularly in terms of bringing growing numbers of minority employees into our business.

But rapidly evolving legal requirements, plus the flood of new administrative rules and guidelines, have changed the ground rules.

Now that we have cleared away many of the uncertainties, we are eager to get on with the job.

We are eager to provide, and we will provide, not just the opportunity for entry-level assignments, but the opportunity for better jobs for each employee in our business who takes advantage of the opportunity.

We are eager to provide, and we will provide, new opportunities for more women and minority males to move into technical jobs as well as other higher level positions.

We will accomplish this -- including the provision of equity payments to selected individuals -- in a sound, business-like way. We will continue to manage our business within a context that takes fully into account our responsibilities to our share owners and to the public at large as well as to our employees.

An additional word about the equity payments portion of the agreement. Some 15,000 employees will get one-time equity payments out of the telephone companies' total of 750,000 employees. Other employees will benefit as the years go on. Taking this step will not adversely affect the future of our business -- on the contrary, it is in the best interest of the business in the true sense of that term.

We look forward to implementing this agreement. We look forward to moving out of the hearing room and concentrating fully on our communications service responsibilities. Those responsibilities are at all times paramount with us, and telephone jobs depend on our meeting them well.

In sum, we're convinced the agreement will better enable us to do what is right for our employees, our share owners, and our customers.