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Presentation to Senate Commerce & Labor Committee

March 27, 2003

Lora Watts / President – External Affairs - SBC West

Throughout history, transportation infrastructure has played an important role in supporting the economic development of Nevada communities. Railways, interstate highways and airports have all contributed to commerce.

Today telecommunication infrastructure is the lifeblood of commerce as communities throughout Nevada seek to diversify their economy and create jobs and wealth for their citizens.

If asked, Nevada's economic development corporations would tell you the quality and reliability of the telecommunications infrastructure critical to their success and a major consideration for many companies deciding to relocate to Nevada.

Nobody is more committed to investing in Nevada than the two companies represented here today. During the last 10 years we have made significant investments to meet the growing needs of business and residents alike. Outside of the gaming industry, I'm not sure any other industry can point to this level of commitment.

Under past regulation, carriers were authorized to recover their investment from a broad base of customers through commission-authorized prices. We have no such assurance in today's competitive environment. We must have the opportunity to recover new investment on a level playing field with competitors.

To sum things up....This bill will be good for the customer, good for the industry, good for competition and good for Nevada. We hope you will approve SB 400 to help us achieve that result.

Thank You. ~~That's the end of our formal presentation.~~