

NORBERT N. SMOOT
FIREARMS CONSULTANT

PHONE (336) 434-4662
FAX (336) 861-3300

• Outdoor Sporting Supply •

6225 Welborn Road • Trinity, North Carolina 27370-7808

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Chief Clerk
NC Utilities Commission
4325 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699 - 4325
Via fax to (919) 733-7300

Clerk's Office
N.C. Utilities Commission

P-100 Sub-137C

Subject: Support for ten digit dialing in the 336 area code

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to express my strong support for the distributed overlay plan for the 336 area code. While I understand the need for additional area codes, as a small businessman, I have suffered a considerable financial and business hardship as a result of past area code changes here in central NC, from 919 to 910 and later from 910 to 336.

For over 20 years, I have operated an insurance consulting business, with clients numbering in the several thousands, in all 50 states. All my contact with clients is by telephone and facsimile. Each time my area code changes, I am forced to reprint all of my sales brochures, and other advertising literature, plus incur the expense of software changes. Although expensive, those are the easy parts. My particular dilemma is that my clients need my services infrequently, so it is quite common for one to two years to pass between contacts. With many thousands of brochures circulating in client offices across the country over a period of many years, I literally get calls everyday from established clients who have had difficulty finding me due to continued area code changes. I am certain that I miss much new business, due to perspective clients supposing I have just gone out of business because they cannot reach me at the telephone number on my literature. My telephone and fax numbers are two of the most valuable pieces of information connected to my business, yet I am continuously faced with difficulties due to repeated area code changes. I needed some relief from these changes.

In my workshop, I have an old ice pick given to me by my father. That ice pick has a four-digit telephone number for the ice plant. Times changed. I remember well, calling my grandmother's five digit telephone number as a child. Times changed to seven-digit dialing. Now it appears that times must change again, as ten-digit dialing becomes necessary. Dialing the ten digits is a minor inconvenience compared to the frustrations and expense associated with ever changing area codes. Programmable telephone dialers are on even the cheapest \$10 telephones, make dialing the ten digits no big deal.

I urge you to end the many years of aggravation, loss of business, and expense called by area code changes. Please adopt the ten digit dialing and the distributed overlay plan.

Sincerely,


Outdoor Sporting Supply
Norbert N. Smoot

Clerk
Stahl