



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 31, 2003

Media Contact: Gail Lawyer

(202) 296-6650

glawyer@comptel.org

CompTel Commends USTR for Trade Negotiations Stance

Washington, D.C. – The Competitive Telecommunications Association (CompTel) today expressed its support for the United States Trade Representative’s (USTR) services offer in response to the World Trade Organization’s (WTO) General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

“We are pleased with the leadership being demonstrated by the USTR in the WTO’s Doha agenda, and hope that this will encourage similar pro-competitive offers in telecommunications services,” said Carol Ann Bischoff, CompTel’s executive vice president and general counsel. “The liberalization of services will no doubt open up billions of dollars worth of opportunities for CompTel’s members and their trading partners around the world.”

CompTel actively works with the USTR to foster the development of robust competitive telecommunications marketplaces around the world. On May 1, 2002, CompTel filed comments in response to the USTR’s request for comments on general U.S. negotiating objectives, as well as country-specific priorities for the work program that was launched at the WTO’s Fourth Ministerial Meeting in Doha, Qatar, in November 2001. In those comments, CompTel warned of continuing trade barriers in telecommunications services and provided a country-by-country analysis of those countries that need to better implement or improve current commitments.

Copies of CompTel’s comments can be found on the association’s web site, www.comptel.org.

“CompTel appreciates USTR’s continued support of pro-competitive policies and looks forward to working with USTR, the Administration and Congress on these and future trade negotiations,” Bischoff added.

###

Based in Washington, D.C., CompTel (Competitive Telecommunications Association) represents competitive telecommunications providers. CompTel’s mission is to protect and advance the interests of its member companies so as to ensure the survival and prosperity of the competitive telecommunications industry in the U.S. and overseas. The Association provides policy and regulatory expertise, educational and technical support, as well as business opportunities for its member companies. CompTel’s members include the leading companies building and deploying next-generation, packet and IP-based networks to provide voice, data and video services around the world. For more information, visit www.comptel.org.