

reasonable and proper, any common carrier company to issue mileage, excursion, school commutation, commutation passenger, or joint interchangeable mile tickets for all or any part of its route in this state, and (2) to require any two or more common carriers whose lines form a continuous line of transportation, or which could be made to do so by switch connection, to establish through routes and joint rates, provide for the manner of securing or paying them and apportion them as between the companies affected thereby.

68. (*Expiration, Abandonment or Discontinuance of Franchise.*)

(a) The commission may require the continuance of any service rendered to the public by any public service company under any franchise, right, or permit, after its expiration date, if any; and no service under a franchise, right or permit shall be discontinued or abandoned without the consent of the commission, which shall be granted if the commission finds that the present or future public convenience and necessity permits such discontinuance or abandonment. Denial of such consent shall not preclude subsequent re-applications whenever the public service company thinks them warranted.

(b) Whenever the commission permits abandonment or discontinuance of any franchise or right in whole or in part involving service to and/or from suburban communities, the commission shall consider all applications to acquire the franchise or right to render such service and shall grant the application of the best qualified applicant. If the abandoned or discontinued right, as acquired by the abandoning or discontinuing public service company or its predecessor, extended from mid-city to suburban termini, or was operated between such termini during most of the time of its existence, or for an aggregate of fifteen years or more, then the said franchise or right to be granted in accordance with this subsection shall likewise extend between such mid-city and suburban termini.

SUBTITLE V—PROCEDURE BEFORE THE COMMISSION

69. (*In General.*)

All proceedings before the commission shall be governed by the rules of the commission, conformably with the provisions of this article. The commission shall not be bound by the technical rules of evidence or procedure of courts of law or equity. Any official act of the commission shall be valid if it complies substantially with the requirements of this article, and shall not be vitiated by any deficiencies of a technical nature.

70. (*Commencement of Proceedings.*)

(a) The commission shall receive complaints from any person, in writing, setting forth the circumstances allegedly constituting a violation of the provisions of this article by any public service company. If the complaint on its face states such a violation or is deemed by the commission to be deserving of explanation the commission shall serve a copy on the public service company complained of, together with an order that the complaint be satisfied or answered in writing within a specified time.

(b) If any complaint is filed with the commission which concerns the illuminating power, purity or pressure of gas; or the