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By Alvaro

Telephonin long distance will cost les WASHINGTON (AP

Americans' long-distance te phone bills could go down much as \$1 billion this year cause of a federal agency's de sion of cutting back the ments big carriers must make local companies.

The Federal Communica Commission voted 4-1 Thurs to order a cut in the charge long-distance carriers payt cal phone companies to b and end long-distance calls.

Long-distance customers see roughly 2 percent trim off their total bills by the act said Mark Uretsky, a chief omist at the FCC's Com Carrier Bureau.

The average long-dista bill for a customer in the Un States is \$17 a month, spokesman Herb Linnen. percent off that would say

customer 34 cents. "It's just a little bit of po change for the average la distance telephone custom said Bradley Stillman, legis tive director of the Consum Federation of America. "W glad to have it, but nowhere near what customedeserve," he said.

In general, local phone panies said the agency went far, depriving them of a price for their service and per izing them for being efficien

The payments, called " charges," amount to \$20 billion a year, the estimates — roughly the and revenues of the entire cable dustry and twice the reve of the cellular phone busines

FCC Chairman Reed Hu said the FCC's action is the ond-largest rate reduction, cuts ordered for cable televis customers in 1994.

Access charges, which passed on to long-distance tomers, comprise about half the average long-distance bill

In addition, the access charge also account for more than on third of local telephone comp nies' revenues

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