

**PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**  
**Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105-3265**

**Public Meeting held December 4, 2014**

**Application of Hamilton Relay, Inc. for approval to offer, render, furnish or supply, Telecommunications Relay Service for the deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired individuals throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania**

**2447601-TUS**  
**Docket No. A-2014-2447601**

**Application of AT&T Corporation for approval of the Abandonment or Discontinuance of Telecommunications Relay Service for the deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired individuals throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.**

**2451537-TUS**  
**Docket No. A-2014-2451537**

**STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER GLADYS M. BROWN**

Today's decisions approve the application of the Commonwealth's new provider of Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), a service that facilitates the delivery of telecommunications to deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired individuals. It also approves, with conditions, abandonment of AT&T's obligation to deliver TRS.

Our new provider, Hamilton Relay, has a solid track record of providing TRS in multiple states around the country. Our current provider, AT&T, has been an excellent provider of TRS from the time the Commission implemented TRS, over 20 years ago, in a collaborative effort with carriers and the Pennsylvania Telephone Association (PTA). As a result, Pennsylvania's TRS was up and running well in advance of federal law on TRS.

The statutory obligation to provide TRS is a duty of telecommunications common carriers, not the Commission's. Because the Commission procured the TRS service on behalf of the telecommunication carriers, and because the service is funded by Pennsylvania's ratepayers, I believe that Commission could have required bidders to locate employees and facilities within the Commonwealth, to the extent possible. Requirements of private parties that are also important state objectives are not automatically an impermissible burden on interstate commerce.

AT&T was able to do just that for 20 years, by working closely with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). Now, those jobs and their economic benefits depart from Pennsylvania and will go to four other states. While I completely support this new TRS provider and the important service it provides, I wish the Commission had more thoroughly considered ways to keep those IBEW jobs in Pennsylvania given the economic impact sure to flow from their loss.

**December 4, 2014**  
**Date**

  
**Gladys M. Brown, Commissioner**