

TONY PAYTON, JR., MEMBER

308 IRVIS OFFICE BUILDING
P.O. BOX 202179
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120-2179
(717) 787-1354
FAX: (717) 780-4789

4509 FRANKFORD AVENUE
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19124
(215) 744-7901
FAX: (215) 744-7906

~~August 26, 2010~~
462 PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19140
(215) 457-5413

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Post Office Box 3265
Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265



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P-2010-215 5915

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to express my thoughts concerning Virgin Mobile's petition to be considered an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) for the Lifeline program. I understand the value of the Lifeline program and how it helps the many Americans who lack the access and means to basic telephone and communication services.

I commend Virgin Mobile's offering of 200 minutes under the Lifeline program, which are significantly more minutes than other Lifeline programs currently on the market. However, additional costs and service stipulations are a cause of concern. I want to ensure that future customers will not be harmed. In order to safeguard our state's low-income residents, please consider the following issues with Virgin Mobile's (Assurance Wireless) current ETC petition:

- The Assurance Wireless website and information obtained from other states where Virgin Mobile has applied, lists that there will be a fee for sending and receiving text messages. This mean the Lifeline user will need to pay in advance for text messages, rather than having them deducted from the monthly allotment.
- Unused minutes from the monthly allotted 200 will not be rolled over to the next month. The minutes are paid for by the Universal Service Fund and therefore should not go unused.
- Not only does the Assurance plan not include text messaging in the monthly plan, the pricing is unclear for the text messaging they will provide.

Again, I am excited about new providers contributing to Lifeline but hope that the welfare of Lifeline program customers are considered ahead of the businesses that profit from them. Thank you for your time and for protecting the best interests of our elderly and low-income residents.

Sincerely,

Tony J. Payton, Jr.

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