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Senate of Pennsylvania

July 9, 2014

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Ms. Lidia Shan
301 Byberry Road
Apt. F14
Philadelphia, PA 19116-1962

Dear Ms. Shan,

Per your request I am writing this letter to give you an update on Senate Bill 1226. This legislation was drafted by my staff after working with you to address your concerns with Verizon. Senate Bill 1226 is modeled after a similar law in Maryland that allows telephone customers to suspend their telephone number and service for up to one year for set amount of money. Senate Bill 1226 sets the charge at \$5 a month.

Senate Bill 1226 was referred to the Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee on January 15, 2014. I sent a letter to Majority Chairman Tommy Tomlinson and Minority Chairwoman Lisa Boscola asking them to move the legislation. My staff has followed up with Chairman Tomlinson's office and we are expecting an answer soon. We are also prepared to offer the bill as an amendment to any Chapter 30 or telephone deregulation bill that comes before the Senate for consideration.

While we await committee consideration and amendment opportunities, it is important to note that any legislation that would impact telephone companies will be reviewed and commented on by Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC). The PUC regulates telephone companies. They currently approve the fees that telephone companies can charge for suspended telephone service. They require the companies to submit evidence of the cost of these suspensions.

To get a better understanding of the impact of this legislation, we asked PUC Commissioner Gladys Brown to review the legislation. She suggests that we delete the \$5 monthly fee and replace it with the term "nominal amount" because the actual cost of suspending the phone service could be less or more than \$5. We also asked if there were short term solutions for you. Commissioner Brown's staff believes that Verizon offers a phone plan that would allow you to keep your phone line for \$5 a month while you are away from the country. They are checking into this issue and will get back to us soon.

Thank you for contacting my office about this issue. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Matt Franchak at 717-787-9608.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Stack".

Senator Mike Stack
5th Senatorial District

MJS/mff