

**JOINT STATEMENT
OF
CELLCO PARTNERSHIP d/b/a VERIZON WIRELESS
AND T-MOBILE**

**Regarding Raised House Bill No. 6534
An Act Concerning Consumer Contracts**

Proposal:

Raised House Bill No. 6534 would require any person or entity engaged in the sale or provision of telecommunications services, community antenna television services, certified competitive video services, television services, Internet services or a combination of these services to disclose to a customer an estimated cost of their monthly bill, to notify the customer if their bill is going to increase over 5% of the original estimate and allow a customer to break the terms of their contract.

Comments:

Cellco Partnership D/B/A Verizon Wireless and T-Mobile are opposed to the bill and urge the committee to reject it.

Although the proposed bill is well-intentioned, wireless carriers already take many steps to provide detailed information at the point of sale and to keep customers informed through the receipt and contract agreement language at the point of sale, text and email messaging, company websites and customer care representatives. Because of the efforts already in place, we believe that there is not a need for this legislation.

Wireless carriers are signatories to a "Consumer Code for Wireless Service" and have made a voluntary commitment to help consumers make informed choices when selecting their wireless service. Originally developed in 2003, the industry's trade association, CTIA, periodically reviews the Code to ensure it reflects the industry's innovations and consumers' needs and expectations. The Code's signatories have adopted the principles, disclosures and practices for wireless service, including voice, messaging and data services for postpaid or prepaid consumers.

Among the Code's 10 provisions and the first listed is a commitment to:

DISCLOSE RATES AND TERMS OF SERVICE TO CONSUMERS

For each service plan offered to new consumers, wireless carriers will disclose to consumers at point of sale and on their web sites, at least the following information, as applicable: (a) the coverage area for the service; (b) any activation or initiation fee; (c) the monthly access fee or base charge; (d) the amount and nature of any voice, messaging, or data allowances included in the plan (such as night and weekend minutes); (e) the charges for domestic usage in excess of any included allowances or outside of the coverage area; (f) for prepaid service plans, the period of time during which any balance is available for use; (g) whether there are prohibitions on data service usage and whether there are network management practices that will have a material impact on the customer's wireless data experience; (h) whether any additional taxes, fees or

surcharges apply; (i) the amount or range of any such fees or surcharges that are collected and retained by the carrier; (j) the amount or nature of any late payment fee; (k) whether a fixed-term contract is required and its duration; (l) the amount and nature of any early termination fee that may apply; and (m) the trial period during which a consumer may cancel service without any early termination fee, as long as the consumer complies with any applicable return policy.

Wireless carriers embrace these practices and implement unique features as competitive differentiators in the marketplace to attract and retain customers. Many of these features focus on providing tools to assist customers in managing their accounts.

Proactive Alerts

- Each carriers provides full disclosures of contract terms, rate plans, along with an estimate of the monthly bill.
- Verizon Wireless sends free text messages to customers who are at or nearing their voice, messaging or data allowances.
 - Customers that are trending toward exceeding their allotted usage amount, can upgrade to an alternative plan (with a larger voice, messaging or data allowance) at any point during the billing cycle free of charge and have the new plan become effective retroactively to the beginning of the current billing cycle. The customer may then revert back to their original plan the next month. These plan changes can be done without contract extensions.

Customer Tools

- The Verizon and T-Mobile websites provide a personalized portal where customers can obtain detailed information regarding their service including detailed voice, messaging and data usage; service plan; bill review, print and payment; add a line, change plans or features; and, contact management and synchronization.
- Customers can also access the Interactive Voice Response from handsets to receive a free text message which provides estimates of minutes used, messages sent/received, and data sent/received in the current billing cycle.
- Customers may also call customer care representatives to inquire about any aspect of their service.

Usage Controls

- Wireless carriers offer various usage control products for customers to set thresholds for voice and text messaging usage for individual or multiple line accounts. Verizon customers who subscribe to Usage Controls may set personalized limits and/or times of the day for voice and messaging usage. T-Mobile's Family Allowances provides the tools to set usage limits for minutes, text messages, downloads and the times of day when a child can use a device.

Wireless customers are looking for products and services that best suit their diverse needs. It is in all carriers' best interest, therefore, to provide customer-friendly and fair practices in all facets of the customer experience.

Conclusion:

For the reasons stated herein Cellco Partnership D/B/A Verizon Wireless and T-Mobile oppose HB 6534.