Verizon Seeks to Cut Consumer Wireline Service in 18 States

Retirees Say it is Dangerous For Older Americans & Intends to Eliminate Thousands of Union Jobs

COLD SPRING HARBOR, NY, UNITED STATES, September 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- It has quietly been disclosed that Verizon has petitioned the Federal Communications Commission to end copper land line service in 18 states and the District of Columbia. The non-profit Association of BellTel Retirees, which advocates on behalf 134,000 Verizon retirees and active employees, is adamantly opposing this as harmful to older, vulnerable Americans.

In his letter to FCC Chairman Brendan Carr and Commissioners Anna M. Gomez and Olivia Trusty, BellTel Chair Thomas Steed called it, "a cloaked attempt for the company to walk away from and eliminate the jobs of tens-of-thousands of union technicians that maintain the system and its critical infrastructure."

> "Like building a passenger ship with no lifeboats"
> *BellTel Chair Thomas Steed*

Millions of Americans regard their home phones as vital lifelines, especially in areas where cell service is unreliable even on the best of days. When a community or county loses power in a storm or natural disaster, an occurrence that has become more frequent in recent years, elderly citizens in particular become reliant on landlines to connect with loved ones and contact 911 in medical emergencies.

"Copper-wire, fiber and other connected-landline, remain a durable, 100-percent reliable solution, especially during emergency situations," said Steed, who worked for over 30 years with the Bell System, including Verizon. "[The Verizon application] ignores the needs of millions of older and vulnerable Americans, particularly in rural areas where cell service is inconsistent, potentially leaving millions of our fellow Americans entirely dependent on spotty or nonexistent service."

Similarly, U.S. Representative Ben Cline (R-VA) shared his opposition with the FCC, noting wireline

alternatives are less reliable during emergencies. Many older adults or those on fixed income may struggle to replace their medical alert or home alarm units linked to the copper system. He said, “an [replacement] option that a carrier can point to on paper but that cannot function at a given address raises serious questions about whether it is a reasonable substitute for the service being withdrawn.”

The proposed service elimination will impact Americans living and working in Rep. Cline’s home state of Virginia, as well as Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Utah, and West Virginia.

The BellTel leader reminded FCC commissioners, “the ratepayers of the land line system funded the research, development and build-out of the satellites, cell towers and networks that both Verizon and AT&T now recognize as their cash cow. You cannot now abandon the people, communities, and ratepayers that funded and enabled Verizon to have a business enterprise valued at $138 billion in revenues and for AT&T $146 billion in 2025.

“Just as the company ratepayers funded the investment of its wireless network, perhaps the FCC should advise the company that Fiber to The Premise (FTTP) would be a suitable option for all Americans,” said Steed. “After all, a public service corporation like Verizon and AT&T should be serving the public, not just shareholders.”

The matter before the FCC is WC Docket No. 26-227 & Docket No. 26-252. The national retiree association is also encouraging leaders of the U.S. Senate and House Subcommittees on Telecommunications & Media to oppose the petition.

###

Hadley Kauvar
Butler Associates
+1 646-213-1369
hkauvar@butlerpr.com

This press release can be viewed online at: https://www.einpresswire.com/article/944926202

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.
© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.