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www.dps.ny.gov

June 24, 2015

Re: Case 14-C-0370 – In the Matter of a Study on the State of Telecommunications in New York State

Dear Community Leader:

In May 2014, the New York State Public Service Commission initiated a proceeding to examine the state of telecommunication in New York State. In light of the rapid changes in the telecommunications landscape, the Commission is seeking to determine if the current regulatory system is sufficient to protect the interests of customers and whether current laws or regulations should be changed to enhance or strengthen oversight of the interconnected telecommunications network of the future.

As part of the proceeding, Staff of the Department of Public Service conducted a fact-based assessment of the current telecommunications landscape in New York. Staff examined industry trends in voice, video and broadband services and reviewed different telecommunications technologies, such as copper, fiber, hybrid cable system and wireless networks. On June 23, Staff issued an Assessment report outlining its findings.

I am writing to you today to inform you of the Commission proceeding and release of the Staff Assessment of Telecommunications Services. The Commission strongly believes that public input from consumers, industry representatives, government entities, educators and other public interest groups is critical for developing a comprehensive picture of the current state of telecommunications. As such, the Commission will hold a series of regional public meetings to solicit comments from stakeholders. The forums are open to the public and will have two parts: an informational forum, consisting of presentations by Commission staff regarding the Telecom Assessment, and a formal public statement hearing where the public is invited to participate and comment on the proceeding. The comments received in response to the Staff's Assessment and this Notice will be used to develop recommendations for further regulatory changes.

I would appreciate your assistance informing your constituents about the forums and hearings and encouraging them to provide comments on the Assessment. It is the Commission's intent to facilitate and encourage active and meaningful participation throughout the proceeding. We hope you will consider joining us at one of the forums.

The dates and locations are as follows:

Date	Location	Time
Wednesday, July 8	William J. Lindsay County Complex W.H. Rogers Legislature Building Rose Y. Caracappa Auditorium 725 Veterans Memorial Highway Smithtown, NY 11788	Information Session – 2 pm Public Statement Hearing – 3 pm Information Session – 6 pm Public Statement Hearing – 7 pm
Wednesday, July 15	NY Institute of Technology 1871 Broadway (between 61st & 62nd) New York, NY 10023	Information Session – 6:30 pm Public Statement Hearing – 7:30 pm
Tuesday, July 28	SUNY Polytechnic Institute Kunsela Hall Auditorium, Room A112 5701 Horatio St Utica, NY 13502	Information Session – 2 pm Public Statement Hearing – 3 pm Information Session – 6 pm Public Statement Hearing – 7 pm
Wednesday, July 29	Binghamton City Hall 38 Hawley Street Binghamton, NY 13901	Information Session – 2 pm Public Statement Hearing – 3 pm Information Session – 6 pm Public Statement Hearing – 7 pm
Tuesday, August 4	Olympic Regional Dev. Authority Conference Center at Lake Placid 2608 Main Street Lake Placid, NY 12946	Information Session – 2 pm Public Statement Hearing – 3 pm Information Session – 6 pm Public Statement Hearing – 7 pm
Wednesday, August 5	Buffalo Central Library 1 Lafayette Square Buffalo, NY 14203	Information Session – 2 pm Public Statement Hearing – 3 pm Information Session – 6 pm Public Statement Hearing – 7 pm

The Staff Assessment may be obtained at **www.dps.ny.gov/TelStudy**. For additional information about the proceeding, please visit the Department's website at www.dps.ny.gov and click on the "Study of Telecommunications in New York State" link located on the homepage of the site.

Sincerely,

Michael Corso

Michael Corso
Director
Office of Consumer Services

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY | Public Service Commission

Factsheet and Notice of Public Hearing

Study of the State of Telecommunications in New York
Case 14-C-0370

The telecommunications industry has changed dramatically over the last decade and continues to transform rapidly with the introduction of new more powerful technologies. New York and the rest of the country has seen the growth of wireless smart phones, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology and broadband services, as well as evolving customer interest and demands. As new voice, video and Internet broadband technologies emerge, consumers have a wide array of services and service providers for their communication needs, albeit at varying technological capabilities and prices.

The New York State Public Service Commission (Commission) has a primary and overarching interest in ensuring that telecommunications services are available at just and reasonable rates and are provided in a safe and reliable manner. Within this changing landscape, the Commission continues to act and evolve its regulatory approach to ensure core regulatory interests and consumer needs are met.

Telecommunications Study

In May 2014, the Commission launched a comprehensive review and examination of the state of telecommunications in New York. The Telecommunication Study is designed to help the Commission determine whether current regulations, policies and practices should be changed to enhance or strengthen oversight of the interconnected telecommunications network and ensure that the industry can continue to meet customer demands.

The study will analyze the varying telecommunications technologies used today and will consider:

- status of competition for communications services and networks;
- current and future consumer expectations;
- maintenance of public safety communications (such as emergency response systems)
- reliability, resiliency and interoperability of networks;
- service quality standards;
- consumer protections;
- affordable rates; and
- promotion and availability of world-class advanced voice, video, and broadband telecommunications services to all New Yorkers regardless of their location or economic status.

Staff Assessment

As part of the Telecommunications Study, Staff of the Department of Public Service prepared an assessment of telecommunication services in New York. Staff's Assessment Report provides a fact-based overview of the current communications landscape, as well as an historical perspective of industry and consumer trends. The Assessment Report reviews availability of networks, adoption trends and competition levels for each of the three major service offerings (voice, video and broadband). It also examines the Commission's regulatory authority and policies applicable to each major service. Lastly, it looks at the publically available financial data and infrastructure trends for major wireline, wireless and cable providers, as well as similar data for smaller New York based traditional telephone carriers.

A copy of Staff's Assessment Report is available on the Commission's website at www.dps.ny.gov/TelStudy. To access information on the Telecommunications proceeding, click on the "Study of Telecommunications in New York State" link located on the homepage of the site.

Public Involvement

The Commission strongly believes that obtaining public input and views regarding telecommunications is critical to developing a rational and balanced approach to meet the needs of the changing industry and evolving customer demands. Stakeholders such as consumers, government agencies and officials, public interest groups and industry representatives are invited to review and comment on Staff's Assessment Report. In addition, Staff has developed a series of questions to establish a dialogue and help guide discussion on several broad topic areas. The questions can be found at the end of the factsheet.

Methods for Commenting on the Case

- **Attend a Public Statement Hearing**: Between July 8 and August 5, 2015, the Commission will hold a series of hearings across the state where all those wishing to comment on Staff's Assessment Report and the list of discussion questions will have an opportunity to make a statement on the record. Additional information about the dates and locations of the hearings can be found on the Telecommunication Study page on www.dps.ny.gov.

- **Via the Internet or In Writing:** Submit comments electronically to Kathleen H. Burgess, Secretary, at secretary@dps.ny.gov or by mail or delivery to Secretary Burgess at the Department of Public Service, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York 12223-1350. Comments may also be entered directly into the case by locating the case via the home page of the Commission's website, *www.dps.ny.gov*, by clicking on "Search," and entering 14-C-0370 in the "Search by Case Number" field. After clicking to open the case, enter comments in the "Post Comments" section located at the top of the page.

- **Toll-Free Opinion Line**: Individuals may choose to submit comments by calling the Commission's toll-free Opinion Line at 1-800-335-2120. This line is set up to receive in-state calls 24-hours a day. Callers should press "1" to leave comments about "Case 14-C-0370 Study of the State of Telecommunications in New York".

All comments will become part of the record considered by the Commission. Comments will be accepted at any point while this proceeding is pending, but are requested by August 24, 2015 to ensure full consideration.