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Ms. Rosario Teixeira For:

Jeffrey Whey, Commissioner

Mass. Dept of Telecommunications and Cable

Consumer Division

1000 Washington Street, Room 820

Boston, MA. 02118-6500

**Re: 5/14 Public hearing  
Lifeline Investigation  
Docket: DTC.13-4**

To The Honorable Commissioner Jeffrey Why:

I am writing to you on behalf of my 23 year old disabled son, Adam, who is currently receiving Social Security Supplemental Security Income as well as a form of MassHealth. He holds a part-time job working for our local Goodwill Industries.

He has a number of emotional and psycho-social issues that impair his ability to function completely in our society.

Over time, Adam has sought to have his independence. I supported that and during September 2010, he became emancipated.

Since then, he was able to secure his part-time job at Goodwill Industries. However, his income from SSI and Goodwill is not enough for his usual living expenses.

During 2011 and 2012, we contacted Assurance/Virgin Mobil Wireless which advertised that it would provide a limited 'free wireless phone' for those who were categorically eligible. As Adam receives SSI and is on Masshealth, he qualified.

For nearly 9 months, I assisted Adam in submitting at least four (4) separate applications to Assurance/Virgin Mobil to secure the no charge cell phone. The entire file of my communications with Assurance/Virgin Mcbil has already been submitted to your office in connection with a complaint that I filed on behalf of my son. You are invited to review same.

Often, Adam is at work, away from a phone, in need of a ride or otherwise out of touch. Given his circumstances, it is critical to be able to have communication with him.

More often than not, he is unable to successfully navigate life without some continued paternal assistance.

With regard to Assurance/Virgin Mobil, the record speaks for itself (see the complete file sent to your office). Their collective ineptitude, wanton disregard and neglect led to endless frustration in getting the so-called 'free phone'. This went on for months. Their conduct and behavior is inexcusable. It constitutes a complete failure of service.

Upon its arrival, the phone appeared to be a refurbished item; and, within less than two (2) weeks, malfunctioned and Assurance/Virgin Mobil failed to respond to requests to replace or repair.

Since then, I have placed him on my own cellphone plan and obtained a reliable phone for him.

As I have told your investigators, I do not understand nor can I conceive how persons who have very limited income, suffer from all sorts of physical, emotional or intellectual disabilities and impairments, can effectively deal or communicate with entities like Assurance/Virgin Mobil. Without my intervention, his application would never have received any attention.

Representatives from Assurance/Virgin Mobil refused to tell me where they were located and ultimately admitted they were in Hondouras. Their english language skills were almost non-existent. Their ability to communicate was the same.

Finally, after filing complaints with your office, someone, supposedly with the Assurance/Virgin Mobil home office, connected with me. She was completely unable to function as a customer service representative, could not explain why not less than four (4) separate and completed applications submitted by me and to the company (by mail and fax) were constantly denied as incomplete. She insisted that applications were not properly completed. Again, I refer you to the file with my complete written correspondences which were faxed - each confirmation ticket was provided.

Each application was correctly completed and should have been accepted and a phone sent. It was not done until I contacted your office, which did intercede. The phone was sent - as defective as it was.

This entity's actions and inactions should merit a disqualification from any federally or state subsidized program.

Persons in the class of sick, injured, disabled, learned disabled, suffering from psycho-emotional or other problems such as lack of education, could never deal with entities such as Assurance/Virgin Mobil. They need help to get these basic services.

I am unable to address the issues created by any other provider. Assurance/Virgin Mobil should be called to task and made to account.

I respectfully suggest that there be independent agencies or contractors established to assist persons who are eligible to make sure that their applications are promptly acted upon and that providers be forced to provide the equipment in working condition and service in a reasonable time.

If those participating in this program cannot or will not perform, they should be penalized and precluded from participation in the program.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kermit Goodman', written in a cursive style.

Kermit Goodman  
for Adam Goodman  
as his Durable Power of Attorney  
Duly Appointed Healthcare Proxy

**\* Revised on 5/15/13.**

**Original incorrectly stated Assurion.**

**The actual vendor was Assurance/Virgin Mobil**