



**Testimony to the Department of Telecommunications and Cable
Investigation: DTC 13-4
May 14, 2013**

Rosie's Place is a sanctuary for poor and homeless women. We serve approximately 10,000 women a year through a variety of programs. We thank you for allowing us the opportunity to submit testimony regarding SafeLink and Assurance Wireless.

SafeLink and Assurance Wireless has been an important service to our guests and we greatly appreciate DTC's regulatory changes implemented with our feedback last year. Once enrolled in the program, our guests are challenged by customer service issues. We are specifically concerned about the slow rate of responsiveness when troubleshooting with Customer Service, whether it is to update minutes or to access a replacement phone (for a lost or stolen phone).

Our guests come to see our advocates to help them navigate customer service. Our guests (or advocates, if we are providing the assistance) are often:

1. Waiting a long time (45 minutes to an hour) just to get to a customer service representative.
2. In many cases, the call is then dropped forcing the guest to call back and start all over again.
3. Once on the phone they can spend another hour between gathering basic information on a guest and being placed on hold.
4. The time spent accessing customer service (including the long wait and hold times) is deducted from the allotted minutes.
5. If a phone is lost or stolen, guests are required to provide the make, model and serial number of the phone. If the guest doesn't have that information, customer service won't shut off phone so no one else uses the phone nor offer a replacement phone. In the past guests were able to disable and replace the lost phone based on providing the name and social security number for verification.
6. We have also had a few guests approached by Safelink phone representatives to sign up for phones who already had Lifeline phones in their homes. When you sign up for Safelink, you lose your Lifeline services. This is not explained or made clear to guests, who are then shocked when they start receiving high phone bills for their home phones. Most of these guests have been elderly, non-English speakers who are not even comfortable using their Safelink phone and felt pressured into signing up for it, without fully understanding the implications.

It is our hope that DTC is able to identify solutions to these issues. If you have any questions, please feel to contact me.

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