

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

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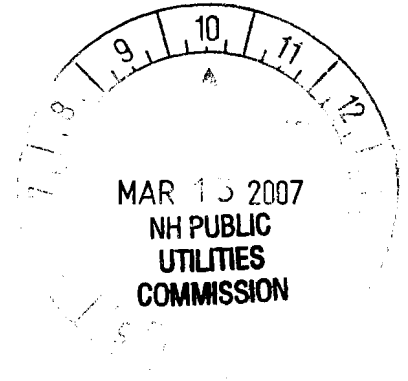


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March 15, 2007

Debra A. Howland
Executive Director & Secretary
New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission
21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301



Re: DT 07-011 Verizon New England/FairPoint Communications

Dear Ms. Howland:

The Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) supports the Commission conducting public statement hearings around the state in the above-referenced docket to solicit comments from the public.¹ The Commission's rules require, in some circumstances, that the Commission hold public statement hearings in the service territory of a utility, such as when it is proposing a major change in its service or rates, or the sale of its assets.² Because Verizon serves all parts of the state, we believe that it is appropriate to hold hearings in several locations around the state, and particularly in those areas, like the North Country, that have few choices for telephone and related services. Such public statement hearings would provide the public with an opportunity to learn more about the proposed transaction, as well as provide the Commission with the public's views on the proposal.

Should the Commission decide to hold such hearings, the OCA would be pleased to assist as appropriate. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Meredith A. Hatfield
Consumer Advocate

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cc: service list

¹ On March 1, 2007 the Communications Workers of America (CWA), the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Locals 2320, 2326, and 2327, and the IBEW System Council T-6 (collectively, Labor Intervenors) requested that the Commission schedule public statement hearings in Berlin, Keene, Manchester, Portsmouth and Salem. On the same day, the New Hampshire AFL-CIO requested public hearings around the state, specifically in Keene, Berlin, Portsmouth, Manchester, Nashua, Concord and Salem.

² Puc Rule 201.02(b)(2) requires a public statement hearing if "[i]t would assist the commission to ascertain the views of the utility's customers by conducting such a hearing in a particular location other than Concord."

