



Public Service Commission Chairman Lane's Column



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Frontier Must Improve Service

By Chairman Charlotte R. Lane, Public Service Commission of West Virginia

“Why is my Frontier phone service so bad?” We hear it every day. Service problems are not new for Frontier telephone customers, but they have gotten worse lately. In fact the PSC received 4,000 complaints about Frontier’s unreliable landline service in the last two years. These complaints include recurring service outages, static on the lines, even emergency service providers and 911 centers have experienced service interruptions.

Many of Frontier’s 300,000 West Virginia customers live in rural areas without cell service or any other alternative except for Frontier. Frontier is their lifeline.

That’s why the PSC initiated a General Investigation into the status of Frontier’s copper network and the service quality problems related to that network. The PSC concluded that the problems were severe enough that we required Frontier to participate in a focused management audit of its operations by an independent auditing firm of our choosing. The results of that audit are to be delivered to the PSC by March 19, 2020. Then Frontier will be required to respond to each recommendation. Once we have that information, we will determine the appropriate course of action to ensure that Frontier will make the improvements necessary to provide reliable service to its West Virginia customers.

In the meantime, the PSC has a staff of highly trained Consumer Affairs Technicians who act as intermediaries between customers and utility companies. Every day, they help people who have service problems or who are facing termination of their service. It’s amazing what a call from the Public Service Commission can accomplish. In fact, 98% of last year’s complaints about landline telephone service were resolved without becoming formal complaint cases. Everyone in the state has access to this service just by calling 1-800-344-5113.

We have all heard rumors about Frontier filing bankruptcy. That has no bearing on the fact that the company must fulfill its obligation to the people of our state. That was our intention when the PSC ordered the audit, and these problems will be resolved, regardless of the parent company’s internal issues.

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