

As a resident of Ocean Bay Park, Fire Island, I am writing to express my dissatisfaction with Verizon's decision to offer Voice Link as an appropriate alternative to the repair of the copper wired basic landline service which was damaged in my community. I believe that Voice Link is being unfairly forced upon our residents, for the following reasons:

I am concerned regarding no medical alerts, no fire alerts and minimal back-up power of Voice-Link; I understand there will only be a few hours of back-up battery power and in an emergency, this is completely unacceptable. This is a serious change since power outages always left phone service unaffected.

On May 18 our electric service for 2 blocks (Champlain St. and Ocean Bay Blvd) was out from 9PM until noon the next day. This was due to a transformer failure. That is 15 hours. LIPA crews responded from the main land. It took more than 2 hours for them to find the trouble. The trouble required another crew to be dispatched from the North Shore over an hour away. It was approximately 6AM when they arrived. Then they could begin to repair the problem. This makes Voice Link a safety hazard for residents of Fire Island.

Verizon is operating a monopoly in Fire Island. We have no other option when it comes to landlines.

• Voice-Link does not provide a satisfactory substitute to landlines. The connection is unstable, hence unreliable.

Am I correct that as the Carrier of Last Resort, Verizon is required to offer telecommunications "even if providing that service would not be economically viable at prevailing rates? I know from local telephone repairmen that there is Optic Fiber on Fire Island and it runs underground across the Western end of Fire Island (the area Verizon wants to abandon). If repairing copper wire makes absolutely no sense financially, and the PSC agrees with that analysis, why aren't you demanding that Verizon hook into the optic fiber that already exists? It seems to me that this solution is the obvious action a COLR should take, and one your department should require. I have heard the carefully constructed reasons for Verizon to abandon any kind of reliable service in exchange for a very inexpensive cellular offering; as I understand Verizon's requirements as set forth in your assignment of Verizon as a COLR, the cheapest, most profitable solution is not what was envisioned when the concept of COLR was developed.

I know you have only agreed to a temporary tariff of this Voice-Link service, but what I fear is the next obvious argument: why make Verizon abandon that service after installing Voice-Link boxes in most every home? By allowing the temporary use of Voice-Link service, you are positioning Verizon for the excuse that the service they want to migrate to is already in place, so why make any changes? There are very good reasons to disallow this request in September when the temporary tariff expires. The reasons are they should have migrated to BETTER SERVICE using optic fiber and they should be working on that all summer long so they are ready to continue to be the COLR for the west end of Fire Island come September.

I conclude it is your responsibility to require this very profitable company to provide service that already exists on the island. As an island of residents, police and fire protection, relying only on good communication, should the absolute least offering from a Giant firm like Verizon be the fairest and most equitable solution given to Fire Island residents?

Finally, I must draw your attention to the numerous complaints, documented communications and expressed frustrations that existed LONG BEFORE Hurricane Sandy. Verizon had literally abandoned holes they dug for "repair" of land lines. We continually asked for these unsafe, pretty large holes to be closed or made safe. No action was taken. It seems to me that the plan to abandon copper wire was in place long before Hurricane Sandy. And I conclude that these abandoned holes and half-repairs exacerbated the damage to their copper wire infrastructure; they were trying to sneak out of town, and then were blessed with a storm of enormous proportions that seemingly excused them from acting responsibly.

Please may I ask that your department acts responsibly and protects us, your constituencies and not fall prey to this giant phone company.

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Sent from my iPad