



# Women's Center of Montgomery County

**Elkins Park:** 8080 Old York Road ~ Suite 200 ~ Elkins Park, PA 19027 ~ 215-635-7340

**Colmar:** 2506 N. Broad Street ~ Suite 203 ~ Colmar, PA 18915 ~ 215-996-0723

**Norristown:** 107 E. Main Street ~ Suite 307 ~ Norristown, PA 19404 ~ 610-279-7474

**Bryn Mawr:** 14 S. Bryn Mawr Avenue ~ Suite 209 ~ Bryn Mawr, PA 19010 ~ 610-525-1427

**Pottstown:** 1800 E. High Street ~ Suite 350 ~ Pottstown, PA 19464 ~ 610-970-7364

**Toll Free:** 24-Hour Domestic Violence Hotline ~ 1-800-773-2424

February 5, 2015

Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission  
400 North Street – Keystone Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Commissioners:

P-2014-2446303  
P-2014-2446304

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2015 FEB 10 AM 10:09  
PA P.U.C.  
SECRETARY'S BUREAU

I am writing to you in my capacity as the director of a domestic violence program, serving more than 4,400 victims each year, to support the petition filed by Verizon to classify services in urban areas of Pennsylvania as competitive. As a victim advocate and a consumer, I view this request as both reasonable and in the true spirit of encouraging growth and innovation in Pennsylvania's *communication infrastructure*.

Before considering the impact your decision will have on Verizon, I feel it is incumbent upon me to acknowledge the wonderful, visionary work and support that Verizon provides to victims of domestic violence each year. More than 14 years ago, Verizon became a dedicated and valued partner in our mission to end domestic violence by creating and maintaining a thriving campaign to provide victims with cellular phones at no cost that became a lifeline for individuals trying to break free of crisis. Verizon's support – financial, technical and tangible - became an integral part of our safety planning with victims, providing them with access to emergency services, counseling, voicemail and other services that enabled them to move to safety and stability.

Moreover, through their commitment to community reinvestment, they have made significant contributions to promoting the physical well-being and safety of victims while also investing in prevention education that will impact our youth in breaking the generational cycle of violence. Verizon has been an amazing corporate partner who is truly and thoroughly invested in our mission to end domestic violence. They understand and embody the spirit of corporate giving that is critical to the coordinated community response needed to stop domestic violence.

With that in mind I believe that removing the current regulations on Verizon can only enhance their ability to serve and assist our victim population and our programs. As I understand the current regulations imposed on Verizon, they are decades old and, unfairly, apply only to Verizon, which seems highly punitive and unfairly restrictive. Those regulations predate many forms of communication upon which the majority of Pennsylvanians have come to rely, such as video chat, text messaging, and social networking.



A UNITED WAY AGENCY

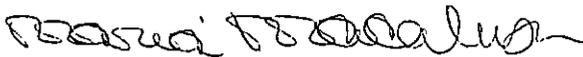
Wireless and VoIP technology have completely transformed our communications network throughout Pennsylvania. Indeed, as a victim service provider with an active crisis hotline, our experience is that wireless communication is the preferred and dominant form of communication for our clients, providing them with more safety, flexibility, and privacy than traditional land line services.

The communications industry has clearly evolved, but Verizon is held to a set of regulations and rules that are not only antiquated but stifle their ability to innovate and explore technologies that, from my perspective, will benefit our communities and the domestic violence victims we serve. I understand that these regulations made sense at a time when there was only one service provider in our markets. With the current communications marketplace – one that is highly competitive, dynamic and offering the consumer diverse options – it seems only logical to make regulatory changes that better match the digitally connected world in which we live.

In speaking with our partners at Verizon, I am confident in their commitment to ensuring access to services for victims and families in crisis. This spirit of community support and engagement is paramount to their corporate philosophy. It is my sincerest belief that your approval of this request will ultimately result in advances and innovation that will enhance the lives of Pennsylvanians and, most particularly, the individuals we serve.

Pennsylvania can be a leader in enlightened regulatory policy by making this practical decision that will benefit its citizens. In this spirit I ask the commission to approve Verizon's petition for reclassification.

Sincerely,



Maria Macaluso  
Executive Director

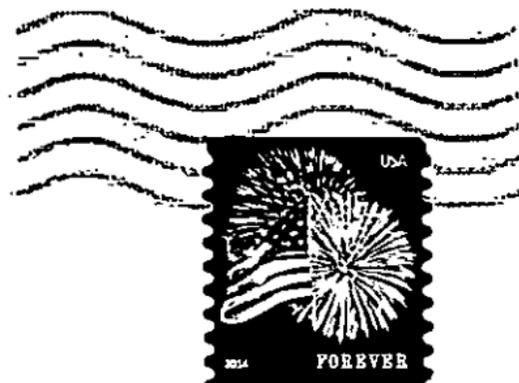


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