



Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc.

Serving Ashland, Crawford, Huron, Knox, Marion, Morrow, Richland, Seneca and Wyandot Counties

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September 11, 2008

FILE

Ms. Renee Jenkins
Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
Docketing Division
180 East Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Reference case number: 00-1532-TP-COI

Dear Ms Jenkins,

On behalf of the Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc., I am pleased to support Embarq's efforts to waive the lifeline vertical services restricting certain consumers.

The Area Agency recognizes the need and value of lifeline services that would include those other variable vertical services to the 60+ population. The Area Agency on Aging would like the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) to consider the following areas of concern for older and disabled consumers:

1. Rule that requires a consumer to seek a signed statement certifying medical or safety need for the service is often difficult for consumers to access.
2. The waiver will allow current Embarq customers with vertical services to also subscribe to the lifeline services and not lose the vertical services.
3. Simplifying the application process for lifeline services will allow more consumers to access the service.

The 60 + population, based upon the 2000 Census, in our planning and service area totals 94,442. As this population ages, their needs will increase. These consumers need telephone service to access needed services that allow them to remain independent within the community. In the Area Agency's 2007-2010 Strategic Plan, Accessible and Reasonable Medication Costs, Strengthened and Improved Programs for Seniors, Availability of Long-Term Care Service Choices and Access to Affordable, High Quality Care were also identified as priority needs areas.

The Agency, without hesitation supports the need for a wavier of Lifeline Vertical Services Restrictions. We would look forward to continuing our relationship with Embarq to develop and enhance programs for seniors and their caregivers.

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If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Diane Ramey, Assistant Director, at 1-800-522-5680, extension 1133 or 419-522-5612, extension 1133.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Duana Patton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Duana" being more prominent than the last name "Patton".

Duana Patton
Executive Director

DP/kh

Enclosure

cc: Diane Ramey, Assistant Director