

Dear Commissioners:

Stop hidden phone fees so I can truly compare prices of phone services. I support the petition filed by the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates and endorsed by other consumer advocacy organizations. CG Docket No. 04-208, Petition for Declaratory Ruling Regarding Truth-In-Billing and Billing Format, is long overdue.

Phone bills should be truthful and easy to understand. I have had Southwestern Bell telephone service for around 10 years and still to this day have no idea what a lot of the charges are for. I will call and request that certain items be removed to find out that they are lumped in on a specific charge that will be the same even if I delete the service. I had set myself up on a plan that was supposed to cost my family around 37 dollars a month and though I do not know why my telephone bill comes to a total of between 70 and 80 dollars after surcharges and taxes. Please pass this bill so that maybe I will at least know what I am paying for.

Because this practice is tolerated by the FCC, long distance and wireless phone companies are able to hide the true cost of service. These add-ons make the advertised price of service significantly less than the amount of the check I have to write each month to pay the bill. Competition will not work if consumers cannot accurately compare prices when shopping for service.

Many states are stepping up to address this problem. They should be allowed to proceed. However, the FCC shouldn't shirk its responsibility, nor limit states from doing more.

The FCC should immediately grant the NASUCA petition to investigate billing practices, and prohibit phone and wireless companies from imposing separate monthly fees, line items or surcharges unless expressly mandated by law or the charge is expressly authorized by a governmental authority.

