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April 18, 2011

## **Ex Parte**

Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: CG Docket Nos. 09-158 and 10-207**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On April 15, 2011, Zed Dancey, Mark Montano, Ian Dillner and the undersigned of Verizon met via telephone with William Freedman, John B. Adams and Nancy Stevenson of the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau.

During the meeting, we discussed issues related to Verizon's filings in the above-referenced pending Commission proceeding on consumer information and disclosure practices. We explained that Verizon shares the Commission's goal of ensuring that customers receive clear, accurate, and usable information about our services and that Verizon has strong incentives to provide such information to its customers at all stages of the customer relationship.

Verizon explained that it offers customers services on a month-to-month basis with no early termination fee, in addition to offers that are based on a longer term (e.g., one or two years) that include a monthly pro-rated early termination fee and provide consumers with additional discounts or other promotional offers and the certainty of a longer period during which prices cannot rise. We emphasized that consumers exercise this choice and that many of Verizon's customers choose to purchase services on a month-to-month basis to retain the flexibility to choose providers or cancel services.

Verizon further described the useful information typically contained in the customer's bill, such as the end date of the customer's term commitment or end date and amount attributable to a promotional service discount. Verizon explained how important it is to maintain its customer relationship and that its bills provides customers with a toll-free number (1-800-

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VERIZON) for Verizon customer service representatives that are able to assist customers with any billing questions or concerns.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, we discussed Verizon's efforts to prevent unauthorized third-party charges from appearing on consumers' bills. As required, Verizon's bills display a toll free number to reach the third-party provider or the billing aggregator for that provider. For example, a bill may state "If you have questions concerning this portion of your bill, please contact NAME at xxx-xxx-xxxx." In Verizon's experience, a significant number of customers contact Verizon about these charges. Through its First Call Resolution policy, if a customer calls Verizon to complain about a third-party charge, Verizon will give the customer an immediate credit of the amount in dispute. In light of Verizon's First Call Resolution policy, Verizon does not refer customers to the Commission, state PSCs, or the third-party providers in order to resolve the customers' concern.

Verizon will also offer customers that complain about a third-party charge a free service called cramming block (or bill block) to block future third-party charges. Any customer can request the block by calling or contacting Verizon via live chat. Information regarding the service appears on Verizon's website. Verizon is also planning to inform new customers of cramming block in their Welcome Letters. In addition, Verizon is continuing to explore various approaches, including disallowing charges from third-party providers that employ certain marketing practices, to help ensure that customer bills do not contain unauthorized charges.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne D. Burton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

cc: John B. Adams  
William Friedman  
Nancy Stevenson

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<sup>1</sup> See Comments of Verizon and Verizon Wireless, CG Docket No. 09-58, Exhibit 27 (Oct. 13, 2009) (sample Verizon bill).