

WASHINGTON -- On Monday, Verizon Wireless introduced data-sharing plans that will give users a monthly allotment of data to be used across all devices. According to press reports, the carrier will require all new and upgrading customers to choose one of these new plans as of June 28th.

Free Press Policy Director **Matt Wood** made the following statement:

"The main goal of these new plans is to get consumers sharing more of their money with Verizon. These tactics show just how uncompetitive the market for wireless services has become, as Verizon and AT&T gobble up spectrum, tie more products together and lock customers into bad deals.

"Just when people have started using fewer voice minutes and text messages, Verizon's response is to make them buy unlimited voice and texts. You may want less, but they make you buy more. That's exactly the opposite of how a functioning market should work.

"The data plans are no better because they also push customers to pay more, starting with sky-high device fees. Even before using any shared data, a family of four would have to pay \$160 each and every month just to connect four smartphones to Verizon's network. Imagine the power company offering you a shared electricity plan but charging you more for every device you plug into an outlet. It makes no sense for consumers — and it's all about dollars and cents for Verizon.

"It's possible that some families on shared plans will see lower prices, while most individuals will definitely pay more. But make no mistake: This pricing change is not about saving you money; it's about preserving Verizon's industry-leading profit margins."