

Even in the 21st century basic telecommunications services like land-line (wire-line) phone service are essential and will continue to be essential for families with home alarm systems. It is the home phone line through which an alarm company is notified when an alarm goes off and calls the police. So home phone services are essential in such circumstances for public safety considering any business with an alarm system would similarly be required to have an active and working phone service. While AT&T and Verizon Communications would like to abandon such services they are essential for individuals to be able to communicate especially seniors unwilling or unable to afford and/or understand how to use a cellular phone.

AT&T and Verizon are threatening universal service not just for basic wire-line telephone service but basic broadband (DSL) and are pushing users to accept bundled services (U-Verse TV, Phone, Internet or FIOS TV, Phone Internet) or to abandon wire-line services altogether and just pay for capped wireless services. Phone services whether wire-line or wireless in nature is used in emergency situations even for people without alarms to call 911. Verizon New York Inc., is seeking permission to discontinue basic telecommunications services in the State of New York while Verizon Wireless is entering into anti-competitive marketing deals with cable companies in the SpectrumCo coalition and separately with Cox Communications in addition to buying their AWS wireless spectrum. AT&T is also seeking to abandon basic telecommunications services but on a nationwide basis and some cable companies like Comcast are making similar requests. If granted we will have fewer choices for such services and be left with no choice in such providers that is unacceptable. Please deny any and all such applications.