The FCC has opened a public comment period on Verizon's proposal, with comments due by December 4, 2026. The FCC is expected to act on the application by December 20.
During today's briefing, we received several important updates:

- **Discontinuation Timeline:** Verizon has committed to not disconnecting copper telephone customers before the fourth quarter of 2027.
- **Replacement Service:** Verizon intends to transition many customers to Verizon Voice Connect, a wireless telephone service that relies on cellular infrastructure. Concerns remain about the reliability of this service in communities with limited cellular coverage.
- **Emergency Communications:** Questions remain about the impact on municipal fire alarms, security systems, elevator emergency phones, medical alert systems, and other infrastructure that relies on copper telephone lines.
- **Power Outages:** Unlike traditional copper telephone service, wireless alternatives require backup power. Concerns were raised about the reliability of these systems during extended outages, particularly in rural communities.
- **Service Availability:** Verizon has indicated that customers will not be disconnected without an adequate replacement. However, questions remain about how service availability and reliability will be verified at individual properties.

Senator Markey's office is actively advocating for stronger protections, including accurate cellular coverage information, reliable emergency backup systems, and assurances that customers will not lose telephone service without a suitable alternative.
We strongly encourage municipalities to submit comments to the FCC before the December 4 deadline, particularly if your community has concerns about municipal infrastructure, public safety, unreliable cellular coverage, or the availability of replacement services.
Comments can be submitted through the FCC's website here:

FCC Docket No. 26-252 – Submit Public Comments

Specific examples of municipal facilities that rely on copper telephone lines, areas with poor cellular reception, and potential costs associated with transitioning to alternative systems would be especially helpful.
Our office would also appreciate being copied on any comments your municipality submits so we can better understand the potential impacts throughout the district and coordinate with Senator Markey's office.
We recognize how important reliable telephone service is to our rural communities, particularly during emergencies, and will continue monitoring this issue closely.
Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.
Best,
Casey

Casey Thomas Pease

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