

March 21, 2014

Via Regular Mail & E-mail
board.secretary@bpu.state.nj.us

New Jersey Bd. of Public Utilities
Kristi Izzo, Secretary
44 South Clinton Avenue, 9th Fl.
Post Office Box 350
Trenton NJ 08625-0350

RE: IN THE MATTER OF VERIZON NEW JERSEY, INC.'S ALLEGED FAILURE TO
COMPLY WITH OPPORTUNITY NEW JERSEY COMMITMENTS
DOCKET NO.: T012020155

Dear Ms. Izzo:

This follows up a meeting with Verizon representatives, convened by Senator VanDrew, in Millville, New Jersey, on March 6, 2014. I am also supplementing my letter to you dated February 19, 2014.

The Hopewell Township (Cumberland County) Committee has met again and discussed the terms of the proposed BPU Stipulation of Settlement.

Hopewell Township now understands that 35 or more single line business or residential customers, located anywhere in Hopewell Township, and not presently served with broadband, and who have no access to 4G based wireless would be provided with service, under the Stipulation. Each new customer must agree to sign a Contract for one year service and pay a \$100.00 deposit to be credited towards their service.

There is no doubt that Hopewell Township could satisfy the "BFRR" minimum of 35 or more new Hopewell Township customers.

One of the Hopewell Township Committee's ongoing concerns is the cost, to Township residents, if the new Hopewell customers are provided their service by 4G based wireless instead of FIOS, since the Township understands that 4G is much more expensive than FIOS.

Hopewell Township is bordered by the City of Bridgeton on the East, Upper Deerfield Township in the North and Northeast, Stow Creek Township on the West and Northwest, and Greenwich Township on the Southwest.

Stow Creek and Greenwich are now close to being completely wired with Verizon fiber optic wire.

Upper Deerfield is already completely covered (by another service provider) with wire based broadband infrastructure, as is the entire City of Bridgeton.

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Therein lies the dilemma. The farms, businesses and school students in the municipalities on Hopewell's borders presently have a distinct competitive advantage over those located in Hopewell Township.

Meanwhile, Hopewell Township's successful commitment to farmland preservation is resulting in an unintended penalty for being good stewards. Because of farmland preservation, Hopewell will never have the population density to cost-justify telecommunications infrastructure buildout. Nearly 75 percent of the Township is zoned for agricultural use. Of that, 32 percent has already been enrolled in permanent Farmland Preservation and more farms are in the pipeline.

Municipalities, such as Hopewell Township, that accord a high priority to farmland and open space preservation, should receive some *quid pro quo* consideration built into every state/service provider agreement affecting deployment of current technologies. Otherwise, the State will inadvertently subvert the public's significant investment in farmland and open space preservation, by not insuring that farm businesses remain viable over the long term. Hopewell farmers must have the ability to compete locally with, the farmers in Greenwich, Stow Creek and Upper Deerfield Townships, all of whom have broadband wire service available at pricing much more favorable than 4G based wireless.

Accordingly, the Hopewell Township Committee is requesting that Verizon be ordered, by the Board of Public Utilities, to provide fiber optic wire service to all of Hopewell Township in the same manner that Verizon has recently wired our next door neighbors in Stow Creek and Greenwich Townships. It is only in this way that Hopewell Township businesses, farmers and students can compete with their peers on level economic and academic playing fields.

Cordially,



BRUCE R. HANKINS
Mayor, Hopewell Township

cc: Eugene Daddario, Clerk
Committeeman Greg Facemyer
Senator Jeff VanDrew
Robert G. Brewer, County Planner
Barbara Stratton, Rural Infrastructure Committee
Eugene Purcell, NJ League of Municipalities
Christopher Smith, Esq., Office of Rate Counsel
Jennifer Young, Verizon