

Pennsylvania Telephone Association

*"The Communications
Leader in Pennsylvania"*

The Friday Report

September 18, 2009

INDUSTRY NEWS

- On Tuesday, the Pittsburgh City Council gave the thumbs up (in the form of a franchise agreement) to Verizon, allowing them to begin deploying their FiOS service. Under the terms of the agreement, Verizon will install the fiber-optic network to at least half of the city's households within three years and have the entire city blanketed within six.
- Another swipe at one of those global comparison telco studies surfaced this week in the form of criticism from the Phoenix Center. Phoenix took aim at the most recent report from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) which concluded that American cellphone users are paying significantly more per month (\$53 per month as opposed to Netherlands consumers who pay \$11 per month) than any of the 30 countries who are members of the OECD. Phoenix said that the usage levels assumed by OECD in its study are exceedingly low and Americans would actually pay more for mobile service at current usage levels if they faced the pricing plans used in the Netherlands.

CONGRESS NEWS

- Precisely what powers does President Obama have with regard to Internet traffic and facilities in the event of a national cybersecurity threat? That is what the Center for Democracy & Technology (CDT) would like to know, and believes that a statement from the President and a Congressional debate on the matter might be beneficial. The CDT recently released a briefing paper noting that while Senator Rockefeller's Cybersecurity Act (S 773) does address cybersecurity threat issues, it needs to clarify what powers the President may have over the private sector in emergency situations.

In other cybersecurity news, Representatives James Langevin (D-RI) and Michael McCaul (R-TX), (the co-founders of the Congressional Cybersecurity Caucus) have written to the President and, while commending him for his efforts in creating a national security strategy for cyberspace, strongly urge him to appoint a chief to head-up the effort.

THE DAILY NUMBER

- 400

FCC staff announced that it will submit to Commission Chairman Julius Genachowski today a report analyzing the agency's 400 major data collection efforts. The initiative is

part of the Commission's internal reform efforts, which also include a revamping of the FCC website, an initiative which has not been undertaken in more than a decade.

QUOTABLE

- *"No one should be without telephone service because they can't afford it. Access to a telephone provides a direct line to vital emergency services and community resources."*

"I believe that there are literally hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvania households who qualify for the Lifeline discount but are not receiving it. Through these Lifeline awareness events, I hope that many more Pennsylvania consumers will learn about, and benefit from, this valuable program."

"Pennsylvania's rural local exchange carriers are equally proud of the network which they have constructed in the Commonwealth and that our state is consistently near the top in national rankings on penetration rates. Telecommunications carriers, regulators, and legislators all realize that the more individuals using the telephone network, the more valuable that network becomes. The Lifeline programs are excellent tools to keep folks on the network and give them access to the beneficial services which Pennsylvania's carriers are providing."

Excerpts from the respective statements of PUC Commissioner Kim Pizzingrilli, Consumer Advocate Sonny Popowsky, and the PTA President at Wednesday's Lifeline Awareness Week event in Harrisburg