



HAMILTON TOWNSHIP DEPARTMENT OF LAW

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August 27, 2020

Via UPS Overnight Ground and Regular Mail
(Tracking No. 1Z A42 6F2 01 9296 3640)

Director Lawanda Gilbert, Esq.
Office of Cable Television and Telecommunications
New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
44 S. Clinton Avenue
Trenton, NJ 08625

Re: Request for Investigation

Internet, Telephone and Cable Television Service provided by CSC TKR LLC d/b/a
Cablevision of Hamilton a/k/a Optimum

Dear Director Gilbert:

I write to you in my capacity as the Director of Law and Township Attorney for the Township of Hamilton ("Hamilton") and importantly on behalf of her residents. For the same serious and compelling reasons and concerns, we join in the letter written to you on August 24, 2020 by Robbinsville Township and formally request the Board of Public Utilities ("BPU") to commence an investigation into the service being provided to both Robbinsville and Hamilton.

As with Robbinsville, our Hamilton residents have made numerous complaints concerning the poor service being provided by Optimum. By way of example only, we provide but a small sampling of the many complaints we have received since January 2020:

Resident 1:

"Today is the 11th day since we lost Optimum's service in our neighborhood. The company management is doing a very bad job during this service outage. They have been extremely slow to respond to the wide-spread problem. Worse still they keep spreading disinformation on the website, claiming 'There are no outages reported at this time' and 'Your service is up and running' before and after their technicians visited several homes on my street and found a common 'street line' issue. Does this merely reflect on the company's inadequate service monitoring process, or is it the company's calculated effort to mislead the public and the state regulators? As we are still in the COVID-19 crisis, Optimum's service outage has not only deprived us of our main source of news and entertainment (cable TV), but also made it virtually impossible for us to communicate with the outside world or work from home (cable internet)."

Resident 2:

“[Our neighborhood has] been without Internet/Phones/TV [for five days]. Many of us have called Optimum with zero success in getting any updates....Due to the pandemic, most of us are forced to work from home, which makes Internet as necessary as power. I myself, because my office is closed to employees, was forced to take Time Off Without Pay for [three days]. I cannot afford any more lost pay.”

Resident 3:

Resident called to complain about Cablevision and how her television and internet goes off more than its on—she had a conversation with the cable company and they advised her that because of more users working at home than ever before.

Resident 4:

“Since Altice took over, it has been the worst at customer service. Just today, I[] have been waiting for over an over for a return call from them. Then when I call back, they say there’s a service outage which is not the case, since my issue is with only one cable box, the other is fine.... I know that I’m not the only one having an issue. If you go to the Facebook page, Hamilton Happenings of Mercer County, you will see numerous posts from people who have had and are still having problems. I know a lot of the wait is due to the COVID-19, but their service has been bad for about 5 years.”

Resident 5:

“We need to do something about Altice (Optimum) service in this community. They arbitrarily increase prices as often as they want to and the price increases are often at very high percentage increases... I am tired of being always at their mercy and have to put up with horrible rate increases and terrible customer service. We can do much better.”

Resident 6:

“There are thousands of residents of the township who have no choice in their provider....I have been told by every provider that I have contacted that they are legally prohibited from serving our area because we are ‘in a zone that is dedicated solely to Optimum.’... In fact Optimum has been so bold as to tell customers that they simply do not care about us. They have dared me to try to find another provider (knowing they have a stronghold) and have even tampered with my service and added fees that they cannot explain to my bill on two occasions.”

Resident 7:

“We have an elderly neighbor and a neighborhood problem such that 911 calls will not go through. Neighbor is 94 years old and his 911 system will not work or will his phone allow a call to 911. We have trouble shooted all day for him, called Optimum to no avail, they say not their problem.”

For the foregoing reasons, and for the reasons put forth in the letter written to you from Robbinsville Township, we respectfully request that the BPU immediately commence an investigation into the services being provided by Altice/Cablevision/Optimum to both Robbinsville and Hamilton pursuant to powers vested in the BPU.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,



ELISSA GRODD SCHRAGGER, ESQ.
Director, Department of Law

cc: The Honorable Jeff Martin, Mayor
The Honorable Richard Tighe, Council President
The Honorable Pasquale Papero, Jr., Council Vice-President
The Honorable Anthony Carabelli, Jr., Councilman
The Honorable Nancy Phillips, Councilwoman
The Honorable Charles Whalen, Councilman
Eileen A. Gore, RMC, CMC, MMC, Township Clerk
Paul Renaud, Esq., Township Attorney, Robbinsville Township

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