

Before the Senate Finance Subcommittee
Opponent Testimony on Telecommunications Provisions of
House Bill 64

Presented by: Ken McKnight, Licensed Massage Therapist
May 19, 2015

Good afternoon, Chairman Beagle and Committee Members.

My name is Ken McKnight. I had worked in construction, but was told I had retinal degeneration. In order to prepare for a career I could do once I lost my vision, I went to school and became a Licensed Medical Massage Therapist. I am visually impaired and considered legally blind. I am self-employed as McKnight Medical Massage, LLC. I have an office at Mountain River Physical Therapy in Athens, Ohio. I also have an office in my home in Coolville, Ohio.

I have a landline at my home. I cannot read a phone book, so have 411 service (directory assistance and information) on my landline, free of charge. I also have a cell phone, but the service itself is unreliable. If I were to use my cell phone for directory assistance, I would be charged \$1.50 per request. Directory assistance through the cell phone is not only costly, but difficult to use because it is voice automated, with bad voice recognition and poor voice prompts. I use my 411 on my landline whenever I need a number, which is usually at least once a day.

I rely on my landline to receive calls from my Massage Therapy clients to schedule appointments, and to order supplies for my business.

I know many persons in Athens, Washington, and Meigs Counties who have no other available phone service other than their landline at their homes. They have no cell service signal at their home. The only way they are able to have internet service is through their landline provider. Landline service is also their only access to emergency services.

One of my friends, Newton, lives in Meigs County and a cell phone tower is near his property. However, he still has no cell phone service at his home through his provider, AT&T Mobility. When I am there, I have no service with my Verizon cell phone.

Another friend, Jodi, lives right outside of Athens has a son with special needs and needs to contact emergency services frequently. She has absolutely no cell phone service at her home, and cannot even receive a text. She relies solely on her landline for all medical appointments and emergencies.

Ken McKnight
Testimony on HB 64
March 26, 2015

I personally know many other individuals whose lives and well-being would be jeopardized if they were to lose their landline service. I know I am concerned about my safety and my daughter's safety. I am concerned about my business. The continued availability of my landline is essential for me to be able to access not only emergency services, but services as it relates to my family's health and well-being, as well as essential for my business.

Thank you for your consideration.