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# PRESS RELEASE

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## Lifeline Discount Telephone Service Awareness Week

**WASHINGTON – Sept. 13, 2010** – Interim D.C. People's Counsel Brenda K. Pennington supports the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA) and consumer advocates across the nation in the effort to encourage consumers to learn more about discounted telephone service programs. The week of Sept. 13, 2010, has been designated as National Telephone Discount Lifeline Awareness Week. The effort includes federal, state and local agencies and organizations, including non-profit and community-based groups.

“Lifeline telephone services are available to District of Columbia consumers right now and I want everyone in the District to know that if they are eligible, they can have affordable basic telephone service for about \$10 per month” said the Interim People's Counsel.

With household budgets stretched, consumer advocates nationwide are working to increase public awareness of Lifeline and Link-Up telephone assistance programs. Both federal programs offer payment assistance for telephone service, making it more affordable for eligible consumers to stay connected or get reconnected.

The Lifeline program typically provides eligible customers with a monthly discount of about \$10 off the price of basic home telephone service, while Link-Up provides a 50 percent discount off the installation charge of new service up to \$30. In many areas, consumers have a choice between the two discounts on traditional home telephone service or comparable benefits for wireless service.

For additional information, DC residential consumers can contact two providers, Verizon and Nationsline to inquire about the services they offer under the Lifeline and Link-up plans.

To learn more about your eligibility visit [www.lifelinesupport.org](http://www.lifelinesupport.org) or contact the DC Office of the People's Counsel [www.opc-dc.gov](http://www.opc-dc.gov) or 202-727-3071.

**Verizon** provides the following information about services for DC Consumers on its website:

Economy II Service is a discounted telephone service available to qualified D.C. residents.

- Residents who meet income eligibility guidelines can receive Economy II Service for \$3.00 a month, plus applicable taxes and surcharges, including free unlimited local calling.
- Income qualified Seniors 65 years of age and over pay only \$1.00 per month, plus applicable taxes and surcharges.

For additional information on how to qualify, please contact the District Department of the Environment / Energy Office on **202-673-6750**.

### **Link-Up America**

Link-Up America is for D.C. residents who are eligible for social service assistance. New customers or customers who move to a new address may qualify for a 50 percent reduction in service connection charges.

