



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

NEWS RELEASE

Consumer Counsel Elin Swanson Katz

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONSUMER COUNSEL APPLAUDS FRONTIER ANNOUNCEMENT OF A PLAN TO EXPAND HIGH-SPEED AND FIBER OPTIC INTERNET CAPABILITIES TO RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES IN HARTFORD'S NORTH END NEIGHBORHOOD

NEW BRITAIN, Conn. (April 29, 2016) – Consumer Counsel Elin Swanson Katz today applauded an announcement by Frontier Communications to expand high-speed fiber optic Internet capabilities to residents and businesses in Hartford's North End neighborhood.

“This is great news for the North End of Hartford, and I believe that once completed, the significant increases in broadband speeds and availability provided by this fiber network will bring real benefits to the businesses, residents, schools, and other community providers in this area. I am pleased that Frontier has stepped forward to lead this important initiative in the North End,” Consumer Counsel Katz said.

“I’m also pleased that Frontier reports it will be offering gigabit speeds at \$130 - \$150 per month. This is competitive with pricing offered in other ‘gig’ cities around the country, and should really put Hartford on the map as a place focused on innovation and entrepreneurial spirit.”

Katz noted that state and local leaders had extensive discussions with Frontier and other internet service providers to bring attention to the challenges with internet speed and access faced by many residents in the North End, including Hartford business owners and community leaders.

“This demonstrates that community engagement can bring positive changes to a neighborhood, especially when the incumbent service providers are willing to listen and be creative in finding solutions. It’s a new form of public-private partnership,” Katz added.

Consumer Counsel Katz's office serves as the public advocate for matters relating to energy, natural gas, water, and telecommunications. Her office also includes the Connecticut State Broadband Office. She reported that she is pleased that Frontier's project will bring fiber to a number of businesses that the Broadband Office had highlighted as facing obstacles to obtaining adequate broadband speeds.

"At today's event," Katz said, "we saw Hartford city officials, business owners, community leaders, representatives of Connecticut service providers, members of the Communication Workers of America, and interested local residents all coming together to acknowledge the value of fiber optic networks and the promise they bring to this neighborhood. We will be following the deployment with great interest and tracking the benefits to the subscribers. It's very gratifying to see this coming together, and I am confident that Frontier will continue to be a state leader in this effort."

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The Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) is the State of Connecticut's advocate for consumers on issues relating to electricity, natural gas, water, and telecommunications. For more information, visit www.ct.gov/occ. The State Broadband Office (SBO) is part of the Office of Consumer Counsel by statute, and works to facilitate the availability of broadband access to every state citizen and to increase access to and the adoption of ultra-high-speed gigabit capable broadband networks.

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