

**FACT SHEET 1: The History of Fiber Optic Broadband in Pennsylvania**

- 1991, the Clinton-Gore presidential ticket put forward a plan called the “Information Superhighway”, to replace the existing copper wires in the state utilities, (that could be 20-70 years old), with a fiber optic wire that could offer new services and compete directly with cable TV.
- 2019: The hype for these networks make the 5G Wireless noise look like a whisper.
  - **“PA Senate OKs Fiber Optics Bill”** June 24, 1993, Philadelphia Daily News.
  - **“PA Legislature Compromises on Fiber-Optics Bill. The Measure Calls for the State to Be Wired By 2015”**. June 25, 1993, Philadelphia Inquirer.
  - **“Phone Bill Goes To House. The Pa. Measure Would Limit Rate Increases and Require A Fiber-Optic Network by 2015”**. May 24, 1993, Philly Inquirer
- 1992: “Opportunity Pennsylvania” was presented and it was a cookie-cut plan created by Deloitte & Touche that was used in NJ, PA, IA, OH and IL,
- Instead of having the government build this networks, the incumbent phone companies-including Bell Atlantic, which controlled Bell of PA claimed they would do the work if there were changes in the state laws; Verizon PA was granted “alternative regulations” (also called “Price caps” or “incentive regulations”.)
- 1993, the PA state legislature created Chapter 30 which modified the State utility code. Then the PA Public Utility Commission (PAPUC) put together an agreement to Verizon PA would upgrade their entire territory,100%, rural, urban and suburban areas equally, by the year 2015, with speeds of 45 mbps in both directions.
- 1993: At the same time, Bell Atlantic filed “video dialtone” applications with the FCC to upgrade the copper wires to fiber, which included PA. In fact, almost every phone company submitted similar proposals, and these were approved.
- 2002: Nothing had been deployed. New Networks Institute (and Teletruth) filed a complaint, claiming that \$1135.00 had been collected per household through the changes in state laws by then almost \$4 billion dollars.
- 2002: The PA PUC also found that Verizon PA had not fulfilled its obligations. Unfortunately, there was a wrinkle; the original legislation only required 1.5 Mbps in one direction. There was some pushback from the state Advocate, (who believed that the Verizon documents filed could keep the 45 Mbps), but the slower speed remained
- 2004: The PA State law was again changed, immortalizing the speed of 1.5 Mbps, but it kept the Verizon PA timeline to complete broadband coverage, 100%, by 2015.
- (Somewhere it let Verizon PA substitute the wireless service for wireline broadband.)
- 2005-2007: Depending on the state, Verizon started the roll out of FiOS, its fiber optic service. But it was short lived.
- 2010: Verizon announced that it was stopping the FiOS deployments except where there were previous commitments.
- 2015: Verizon [filed with the State](#) claiming they had 96% of the Verizon Pennsylvania territory finished and on schedule for completion by the end of 2015. (Verizon also includes “Verizon North”, which was part of the old independent GTE and Contel territories, and was taken over by Verizon.)
- 2015: We estimated that only 37-42% of the state had been upgraded to fiber optics.
- 2015: Verizon PA overcharged customers an estimated \$18 billion for a fiber optic future they never got. This does not include the monies from the cross-subsidies of the wireless networks and other lines of business which we recently uncovered.