

The Towns of Shutesbury & Leverett  
c/o S-L Broadband Committee  
Town Hall  
Shutesbury, MA 01072

April 21, 2005

Ivan G. Seidenberg, CEO  
Verizon Communications, Inc.  
1095 Avenue of the Americas, 36th Floor  
New York, NY 10036  
Phone: (212) 395-2121

Mr. Seidenberg,

On behalf of the Select Boards and residents of Shutesbury and Leverett, MA, we are writing to you to formally request high-speed internet services.

Even though surrounding towns like Amherst, Pelham, Montague, and others have had Verizon DSL for years, this service is totally unavailable in Leverett, and almost completely unavailable in Shutesbury. It does not seem right that we remain almost completely unserved by DSL while, in several parts of the state and country, Verizon is already replacing DSL with better technologies (like fiber-to-the-home).

In addition to the very relevant issues of fairness and good corporate citizenship, providing DSL also makes good business sense in Shutesbury and Leverett. There are several ways to see that there is overwhelming demand for DSL and that the penetration rates would be extremely high.

First, look at the incredible media coverage that our residents' efforts have generated (go to <http://slbc.westernmass.us> and click on IN THE NEWS).

Second, several sources of demand data have been made available to Verizon's regional director for public and government relations and several of her predecessors (CC-ed below).

Third, demographically, this is a bedroom community for UMass Amherst and the five colleges area. A very large portion of our residents are faculty, administration, students, telecommuters, home businesses, and other categories of technology savvy residents who can afford \$30 per month. In fact, many residents are paying \$500/month for dedicated T1 lines.

Fourth, Verizon would have no competition in that it would be the exclusive provider of high-speed internet (there is no cable provide in either town, and satellite internet is extremely unreliable in our towns).

By now Verizon (via the various Verizon regional directors for public and government relations) is very familiar with our official joint committee created to address this services gap. In fact they

receive our monthly update emails. The Shutesbury-Leverett Broadband Committee's first task of the Committee was to articulate our values regarding the issue of technology access. These values, which can be downloaded from the Committee's web site (<http://slbc.westernmass.us>), include:

1. Universal service
2. Environmentally Sustainable Economic Development
3. Public Safety and Health (services for Police, Fire, Emergency Management, and Health Departments)
4. Education (access for schools, libraries, and students at home)
5. Civic Engagement and Local Democracy (opportunities for seniors, disabled residents, and other home-bound residents to participate in public life)

As Verizon's various regional directors for public and government relations also know by now, out of necessity, we are also planning the provision of our own services. The Committee stays very current regarding the state of municipal broadband and community-based technology applications. We now understand, for example, that the cost for Verizon to deploy DSL in remote terminals that serve Shutesbury and Leverett is just a small fraction of what it will cost us to deploy our own services. It is also the position of the two towns that if Verizon were to deploy universal broadband services, our objectives would be met and there would no longer be a need to pursue our own services.

We also understand that Verizon has lobbied, with some success, to block municipal broadband efforts in at least one location (Philadelphia). As we understand it, new legislation in Pennsylvania requires, among other things, that communities formally request services before attempting to provide its own services. You have of course known of our official and intense desire for broadband services for some time, but we are writing to you now in order to satisfy this stipulation in case this Pennsylvania legislation becomes a national precedent (as some suspect it may).

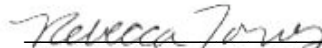
Regarding the recently deployed Verizon DSL services in Shutesbury, several residents are very pleased with their service, and so in one sense we are also very pleased. However, only a fraction of Shutesbury residents, and no Leverett residents are served by this minimal deployment. And even according to the normal expectations of DSL technology, the results are disappointing due to the poor quality of Verizon's copper network here. Specifically, Verizon DSL typically services residences within 2-3 miles of the installation location (in this case, near the Shutesbury Elementary School). In reality, some Verizon customers that are as few as three homes away from this location are ineligible for service. The final concern about Verizon's recent deployment is that universal service, or at least a view towards eventual universal service, is a top priority for us. Token deployments such as these, while terrific for the handful of residents who can actually get it, threaten to undermine this very important local and regional movement.

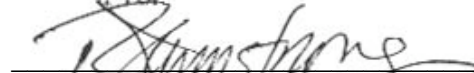
In summary, the towns of Shutesbury and Leverett would like to ask Verizon to consider the community need and the market demand, and deploy DSL technology for all residents and


institutions. We would be delighted to work with you to facilitate any part of that process. If you decide you cannot fill in this gap in services, we ask that you support (or at least not block) our efforts to do so ourselves.

Sincerely,


SHUTESBURY SELECT BOARD

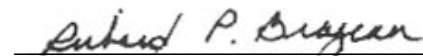
  
Rebecca Torres, Chair


  
Ralph Armstrong

  
Joseph C. Jacobs

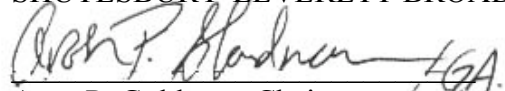
LEVERETT SELECT BOARD

  
Fenna Lee Bonsignore, Chair

  
Richard Brazeau

  
James Lyons

SHUTESBURY-LEVERETT BROADBAND COMMITTEE

  
Aron P. Goldman, Chair  
Shutesbury-Leverett Broadband Committee  
(413) 549 1193  
<http://slbc.westernmass.us>

CC:

1. All Shutesbury and Leverett Committees and Departments
2. Carol Baribeau, Regional Director for Public Relations, Springfield, MA, (413)-731-8606, [carol.l.baribeau@verizon.com](mailto:carol.l.baribeau@verizon.com)
3. Congressman John Olver, c/o Kristin Wood, 57 Suffolk Street Suite 310 Holyoke, MA 01040, [kristin.wood@mail.house.gov](mailto:kristin.wood@mail.house.gov), 413-532-7010
4. Rep. Steve Kulik, c/o Bill Tone, The State House, Rm 279, Boston, MA 02133, (413) 772-2727, Tel: (978) 575-0223
5. Sen. Stan Rosenberg, c/o Mary Jane Bacon, 1 Prince Street Northampton, MA 01060, (413) 587-6259, The State House, Boston, MA 02133-1053, (617) 722-1532
6. Sen. John Kerry, c/o Michael Vito, One Financial Plaza, 1350 Main St, 12th Fl, Springfield, MA 01103, (413) 785-4610, [Michael\\_Vito@kerry.senate.gov](mailto:Michael_Vito@kerry.senate.gov)

7. Commissioner Michael J. Copps, Federal Communications Commission, 445 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20554, Michael.Copps@fcc.gov, 1-888-225-5322
8. Linda Dunlavey, Executive Director, Franklin County Regional Council of Governments, 425 Main Street Greenfield, MA 01301, (413) 774-3167 x103, lindad@frcog.org
9. Jessica Atwood, Economic Development Planner, Franklin County Regional Council of Governments, (413) 774-1194 x101, jatwood@frcog.org
10. Scott Merzbach, Hampshire Gazette, 55 University Drive, Amherst, MA 01002, 413-549-2000, smerzbach@gazettenet.com
11. Richie Davis, Greenfield Recorder, 14 Hope Street, Greenfield, MA 01302-1367, (413) 772-0261 x 269, rdavis@recorder.com
12. Betsy Calvert, The Springfield Republican, 280 Main St, Greenfield, MA 01301, ecalvert@repub.com, 413-772-6506
13. Peter Howe, Boston Globe, (617) 929-3055, PO Box 55819, Newsroom, Boston, MA 02205, howe@globe.com
14. David Pogue, New York Times, david@pogueman.com, 229 West 43rd Street, New York, NY, 10036