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John B. Rhodes, Chair

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**Improvement Plan Underway for Frontier Communications
*Western New York Telephone Company Needs to Improve Reliability, Customer Service***

ALBANY — The New York State Public Service Commission (Commission) today received a report from staff indicating that several Frontier Communications subsidiaries have significant service quality problems, including escalating complaint rates, lengthy repair durations, and localized network reliability issues. As a result, staff will work with Frontier to develop and implement a plan to improve poor localized network reliability conditions for four Frontier subsidiaries.

“Staff has become increasingly concerned with the service quality of Frontier, especially in its Citizens, Frontier Rochester, Frontier New York, and Ausable Valley subsidiaries; complaints include long repair durations and repeated out-of-service conditions, as well as Internet access and speed issues,” **said Commission Chair John B. Rhodes**. “Customers need the company to do better, and we will ensure that it does.”

In response to the increase in complaints, staff will request Frontier perform a review of its customer trouble reports at a more granular geographic level than the central office territory to identify the localized issues and causes of recurring outages. Staff will also request that Frontier produce monthly data necessary to calculate reliability results for each of the four companies during the most recent three years.

In addition to the production and analysis of more granular data, staff will request that Frontier conduct interviews of its local supervisors and technicians to help identify network plant/facility elements that are substantial contributors to poor network reliability performance. Further, staff will work with Frontier to review the findings of this data analysis and identify the root causes of recurring outages, as well as develop a plan to improve network reliability performance.

If Commission action becomes necessary, staff will bring a recommendation for such action to the Commission at a later date. Frontier serves approximately 221,000 access lines, representing approximately 8 percent of the total access lines in the State. However, like most local telephone companies, Frontier continues to lose traditional access lines, which it attributes to increased competition from VoIP and wireless providers that are now serving Frontier’s service territory. During 2018, Frontier lost approximately 30,000 access lines.

Frontier has eight affiliates: Frontier Communications of Rochester, Inc., Citizens Telecommunications of New York, Inc. d/b/a Frontier Communications of New York, Frontier Communications of New York, Inc., Frontier Communications of Ausable Valley, Inc., Frontier Communications of Seneca-Gorham, Inc., Frontier Communications of Sylvan Lake, Inc., Frontier Ogden Telephone Company, and Frontier Communications of America.

Service quality provided by the majority of New York's small local telephone companies met the Commission's service standards during 2018. In 2018, out of a total of 77 companies and operating divisions considered for commendation for providing service quality exceeding the Commission's service standards, 49, or 64 percent, of them met the commendation criteria. This compares to 48 that met the criteria in 2017.

Today's action may be obtained by going to the Commission Documents section of the Commission's Web site at www.dps.ny.gov and entering Case Number 18-C-0219 in the input box labeled "Search for Case/Matter Number". Many libraries offer free Internet access. Commission documents may also be obtained from the Commission's Files Office, 14th floor, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223 (518-474-2500). If you have difficulty understanding English, please call us at 1-800-342-3377 for free language assistance services regarding this press release.