



## **DRA**

*Division of Ratepayer Advocates  
California Public Utilities Commission*

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**Dana S. Appling, Director**

<http://ora.ca.gov>

June 23, 2006

Honorable Jackie Speier  
State Capitol, Room 2032  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 440 (Speier) Support**

Dear Senator Speier:

The Division of Ratepayer Advocates supports your SB 440, which would require specified telecommunications services to provide with each bill a statement of customers' rights to contest unauthorized charges on their service bills.

As you know, the majority of telecommunication customer complaints the California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) receives are about billing. Unfortunately, many of these customers are unaware of their rights as specified in Public Utilities Code Section 2890 or recently adopted in Commission Decision 06-03-013. Your bill would ensure this invaluable information is provided to customers in a clear and conspicuous statement with each service bill.

Moreover, your bill would augment recent Commission efforts via Decision 06-03-013 by specifying in statute that while a complaint investigation regarding an unauthorized charge is pending, a customer is not required to pay the contested charge.

Perhaps most importantly, your bill would streamline the dispute process and reduce litigation by clarifying that certain information provided by customers constitutes sufficient proof of unauthorized activity, by eliminating the uncertainty as to whether that proof is sufficient, your bill would reduce the length of disputes and provide customers with a better ability to effectively resolve these problems.

The Division of Ratepayer Advocates supports your efforts to protect consumers and looks forward to working with you to pass this important legislation.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further, please call Matthew Marcus our Legislative Director at (916) 327-3455 or me at (415) 703-2544.

Sincerely,

Dana S. Appling, Director  
Division of Ratepayer Advocates