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Consumers for Paper Options Applauds Pennsylvania Proposal Prohibiting State Utilities from Charging for Paper Statements

WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 16, 2015) – [Consumers for Paper Options](#) (CPO), a coalition of individuals and organizations advocating for access to paper-based services and information, has submitted [comments](#) in support of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission’s proposed rule prohibiting state utilities from charging customers for paper billing statements.

“The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission is taking an important step to protect the interest of tens of thousands of customers across the state,” said John Runyan, executive director of Consumers for Paper Options. “Paper-based communications and information are critically important for millions of Americans. Not only are 25 percent of citizens without regular Internet access and in need of paper-based statements, but a majority of all Americans believe it is wrong for companies to charge customers to receive information in paper format. Consumers want, and should have, the option to choose paper-format bills and statements, without being penalized for that choice”

A 2013 [survey](#) commissioned by Consumers for Paper Options found that an overwhelming majority of American adults across all demographic groups believe that consumers should not be forced to receive information in an electronic format. More than 80 percent of respondents said it is not acceptable for companies that send bills, statements, and informational documents such as proxies or privacy statements to force customers to receive those documents in electronic format only, while 82 percent agree that some people simply do not like computers or are not interested in learning how to use them, and that it would be unfair to force these people to receive bills and statements digitally/electronically.

These same conclusions were also borne out by [a study conducted this year by the U.S. Postal Service](#). The analysis, which covered three consecutive months of 2014 billing data for a major U.S. utility company, found that 91 percent of customers chose to receive their statements by mail.

To access the comments filed by Consumers for Paper Options to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, click [here](#).

About Consumers for Paper Options

Consumers for Paper Options is organized by the American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) and the Envelope Manufacturers Association (EMA) to bring together industry, non-profits and consumers in an effort to address the transition to Internet-only resources at the exclusion of millions of citizens. Consumers for Paper Options is united in the belief that paper-based communications are critically important for millions of Americans, especially seniors and the 25 percent of households without Internet access. While regulated entities and governments at every level need to streamline services, cut costs and improve efficiencies, the goal of Consumers for Paper Options is to preserve access in a way

that neither hinders the natural evolution of technology nor discriminates against those who may not, or cannot, use it. For more information, visit www.paperoptions.org.

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