

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER MEREDITH ATTWELL BAKER**

Re: *In the Matter of Consumer Information and Disclosure Empowering Consumer to Avoid Bill Shock, CG Docket No. 09-158.*

The Chairman deserves credit for raising the profile of this consumer issue, particularly as service offerings become more innovative, wireless devices become more complex, and more carriers experiment with tiered pricing. This is a serious issue that deserves our attention as technologies evolve. Many of us can recall a surprise on our mobile phone bills. But as the 97.4 percent complaint resolution rating of the Better Business Bureau and 92 percent approval rating from our own survey in May would suggest, many of us are also satisfied with our provider's response. It is unfortunate that the item is silent on these issues.

Better informed consumers will unquestionably make more informed choices. But we as a Commission must also be wary that even well-intentioned regulation, like this initiative, often imposes unintended costs. If we don't strike the right balance as regulators, we risk imposing costs on providers that could result in higher prices and lower quality of service for consumers. Upgrades to providers' billing systems may be expensive and burdensome for smaller providers and prepaid services and put them at a competitive disadvantage.

I think this issue is well suited to an industry-led solution. Competition on the basis of better customer service already distinguishes and differentiates carriers. Innovation by wireless carriers in this area benefits consumers. Consumers have the ultimate power to manage their "shock." The imposition of static, inflexible rules could undermine the commendable efforts many carriers have already taken and potentially restrict the use of important competitive tools that can serve customers better.

It is incumbent upon the wireless industry to redouble their efforts to educate consumers. They must provide clear information on the available monitoring tools and ensure that they are adequate and comprehensive. The voluntary industry efforts already in the marketplace—like the CTIA Consumer Code, which aims to improve consumer disclosure practices, and individual carrier initiatives—are a first step. My hope is that more industry participation takes place between now and the Commission's ruling on this matter. Ultimately, it's in the wireless industry's best interest to make clear to the consumer all that they're doing to manage expectations and avoid surprises. There is no need to wait for the Commission to act to provide more and consistent types of information. Indeed, if enough progress is made, the Commission may not have to act at all.