

Dept. of Justice: AG Kaul, Secretary Romanski secure \$15 million agreement with Frontier Communications

Posted on Thursday, Jul 28, 2022

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

MADISON, Wis. – Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) have reached an agreement with Frontier Communications to address concerns with the company's advertising of internet access speeds and landline telephone service. The agreement resulted from an investigation by DATCP and Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) and includes a \$15 million commitment by Frontier to improve its infrastructure in Wisconsin over the next four years and a \$90,000 payment to the State.

"This agreement will lead to better service for Frontier customers in Wisconsin," said AG Kaul. "This case is another example of how DOJ and DATCP work together to protect consumers."

"Wisconsin consumers deserve honest advertising and reliable services related to their internet speeds and telephone services," said Randy Romanski, DATCP Secretary. "This agreement ensures these improved practices for Wisconsinites, as well as upgrades to communications infrastructure so future consumers have better access to the high-quality products they pay for."

The agreement with Wisconsin requires Frontier to significantly improve its disclosure practices regarding internet speeds when installing new service for customers and requires Frontier to provide opt-out opportunities for consumers who do not receive the advertised internet speed purchased.

Wisconsin's agreement also requires improvements in Frontier's advertising of telephone service and its handling of service outages in Wisconsin, and that Frontier prioritize the handling of service interruptions to customers with a Medical Emergency Account.

In May 2021, Wisconsin joined several states in a lawsuit initiated by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) against internet and telephone service provider Frontier Communications, alleging that the company did not provide many consumers with internet service at the speeds it promised them and charged many for more expensive and higher-speed service than the company actually provided. Wisconsin asserted legal claims regarding Frontier's misleading telephone service advertising and delivery of telephone services, as well.

Although allowing the FTC to proceed with its case, the federal court in California dismissed claims brought by Wisconsin and several other states on jurisdictional grounds, without prejudice. Wisconsin resumed its independent investigation of Frontier, and subsequently the parties entered into discussions that resulted in an amicable outcome, eliminating the need for further investigation or litigation. Frontier has separately entered into a Consent Order with the FTC, which was approved by the federal court in May.

The agreement with Wisconsin incorporates the full injunctive-type relief provided for in the federal Consent Order regarding internet service.