



TOWN OF NORTH SALEM

Delancey Hall
266 Titicus Road
North Salem, N.Y. 10560

Office of the Supervisor

August 20, 2020

To: Governor Andrew Cuomo
County Executive George Latimer
PSC Commissioner John Howard
NYS Senator Peter Harckham
Assemblyman David Buchwald
County Legislature Board Chairman Benjamin Boykin

The elected officials of the municipalities of Westchester County listed below, write this letter on behalf of our communities, calling on our elected leaders and our *Public Service Commission* to discuss with Altice USA their response to the recent Tropical Storm Isaias. Customer service has been getting worse over the years and this storm has shown that they have not focused sufficient company resources on customer support or their network's availability.

According to numbers Altice provided us last week, their customer base in Westchester County totals 212,771. The critical need for TV, internet and phone services is higher today due to the COVID pandemic as many people are working from home and students are required to participate in online classes.

Many municipalities do not have other options for these services and solely rely on Altice USA, and as such Tropical Storm Isaias was a wakeup call showing what can happen to us this Fall as we enter our hurricane season.

Altice USA has fallen short in the following areas;

1. **Altice needs to power their network nodes when commercial power is lost.** This is critical. Currently Altice supplies limited battery power which will maintain their network for 4 or more hours. On our call with them in the storm aftermath they stated that 40% of their network came back up days later when commercial power was restored and only 9% of their customers service was still down. A large portion of their 400,000 customers in the *Hudson Valley* should have never lost connectivity if Altice powered their nodes which is a practice they followed previously.
2. **Altice needs to improve their customer support management tools.** When asked about their customer support Westchester's elected officials were actually told to have Altice customers use social media tools to notify them of problems. Our constituents were up in arms complaining to us about the lack of customer support. Customers waited hours online or on the phone trying to get through to Altice to register problems and request repairs. For the lucky people repair dates were made but broken, often without notice to the customer.

Altice needs to develop specific tools that will scale to support system wide outages as experienced during Tropical Storm Isaias so customers can report outages and be provided an estimated time of recovery. They need better internal systems to track the work done and the customers who are still without service.


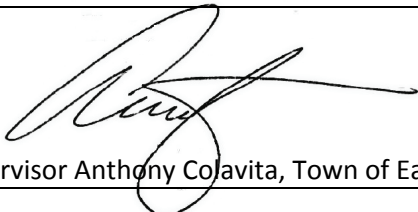


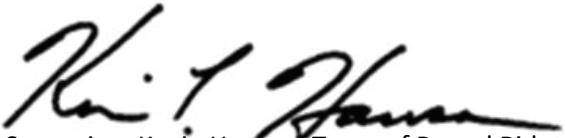

3. **Altice needs additional tech support and equipment in the field to do proper repair and maintenance on the system.** Altice lacks the required field personnel and equipment to address the system outages especially after a recent furlough that affected a majority of field technicians in Westchester. Altice employees have told constituents that they lack sufficient vehicles to do the required work. On our calls with Altice multiple Town's were offering municipal bucket trucks to Altice to allow them to repair damage in their Towns.
4. **Altice is not following DPS guidelines when providing credit.** The guidelines say they owe a subscriber a credit *"when the outage was not caused by a subscriber"*. We understand this is only for the TV portion of the bill. Their current practice is to provide a credit only if your service was still down 4 hours after power was restored. Many of our constituents will receive no credit after being without their network for a week or more. Even though many would have been able to use the network if it was powered. The monetary cost to them would have been significantly more had they been following PSC guidelines.

The public has become increasingly concerned about the quality of service and customer support provided by Altice USA. Altice's actions in this last storm have caused an outcry from our constituents. As a *de facto* monopoly for many of our communities we require the State to step in and use their powers to force Altice to provide quality customer support and a higher level of service.

Sincerely,



Warren J. Lucas
President WPATS
Supervisor Town of North Salem

 Supervisor Chris Burdick, Town of Bedford	 Supervisor Anthony Colavita, Town of Eastchester
 Supervisor Peter Parsons, Town of Lewisboro	 Supervisor Linda Puglisi, Town of Cortlandt
 Supervisor Kevin Hansan, Town of Pound Ridge	 Supervisor Dana Levenberg, Town of Ossining

<p>Approved by Supervisor Slater</p> <p>Supervisor Matt Slater, Town of Yorktown</p>	 <p>Supervisor Ivy Pool, Town of New Castle</p>
 <p>Supervisor Gary Zuckerman, Town of Rye</p>	<p>Approved by Supervisor Morrissey</p> <p>Supervisor Rick Morrissey, Town of Somers</p>
 <p>Supervisor Mayor Gina Picinich, Village of Mt Kisco</p>	 <p>Supervisor Mayor Ron Belmont, Village of Harrison</p>
 <p>Supervisor Nancy Seligson, Town of Mamaroneck</p>	 <p>Supervisor Paul Feiner, Town of Greenburgh</p>
 <p>Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi, Town of Mt Pleasant</p>	 <p>Mayor Lorraine Walsh, Village of Larchmont</p>
 <p>Westchester County Legislator Kitley Covill</p>	<p>Approved by Mayor Murphy</p> <p>Mayor Tom Murphy, Village of Mamaroneck</p>
 <p>Mayor Drew Fixell, Village of Tarrytown</p>	 <p>Mayor Nicola Armacost, Village Hastings on Hudson</p>
 <p>Supervisor Rick Morrissey, Town of Somers</p>	 <p>Supervisor Michael Schiuro, Town of North Castle</p>

Approved by Mayor Kaboolian

Mayor Nancy Kaboolian, Village of Ardsley

Approved by Mayor Gearity

Mayor Victoria Gearity, Village of Ossining