

3/1/2021

Please pass along to anyone who acquired fiber optics from Hawaiian Telcom within the last 3 years. I noticed last year on my monthly bill, which I really had not looked past the first page until then, that my \$50 per month fee was going up to \$245 per month at the end of my "promo" on 4/2/21, 3 years after signing up for the service. I was informed when signing up for the fiber opts that the charge was \$50 a month; there was not any statement regarding the actual charge was \$245 a month and that I would be on a special promotion for 3 years. Thank goodness I finally looked in detail at my bill last year, however, what about the many, like my neighbor, who signed up for direct withdrawal from her bank and never sees a bill???? She was aghast when I told her to go online and look at her account. Her bill would go up to \$245 a month in June.

Long story short, I did get KITV involved and because the customer advocate contacted Hawaiian Telcom, I did acquire a new promo, but the email confirmation I received quoted \$7 a month more than what I was told on the phone. When calling HI Telcom again, I was told the reason was due to proration, which makes sense, but that is not how the email was worded. I called again in May and finally was able to acquire a credit for my \$7 over the rate I was quoted and now have a monthly bill of \$48.50. It is a wonder why one has to call so many times to obtain a rate that was promised on the phone. One must be one's own advocate.

So, Senator Schatz's aide, Ishan Mehta, has been in contact with me, so I am asking, as is he, for anyone in this situation to file a complaint with the FCC and to contact him. The information is below:

Link to file a complaint to FCC and below is what I wrote, however, you can write or amend as you wish. Again, the point is to press that there are so many older individuals (and others) in our subdivision who may have dementia or just not have paper mail and no advocates to see the promo expiration about which they know nothing and the cost of \$245 would happen, perhaps for months before the customer realized why their bank account was being depleted.

[Submit a request – FCC Complaints](#)

\$245/month price with \$195.05 credit NEVER disclosed up front, nor that there was a 3 year "promo." We were told cost was only about \$50 a month. No limit on timeline explained. Actually looked at invoice last year and saw the expiration date and the monthly \$245 charge. When calling local # to ask re new promo was advised there was none. I had to contact the local news to complain in order to get a response from Hawaiian Telcom. Problem is with others who have direct withdrawal and older people with no advocates or dementia not knowing about their promo expiring. There was no disclosure provided to us at the start of our service. Plus, why do people have to spend hours trying to get a new promo option? How can \$245 be a charge when a federal grant enabled Hawaiian Telcom to install fiber opts in our Hawaiian Acres, Puna, Hawaii, Hawaii subdivision?

I am also including the copy of the email I sent to Senator Schatz's aide, Ishan Mehta, and it is expected that you scan and include a copy of the relevant page of your invoice or download from your account as accessed online when you write the FCC and please write Ishan Mehta, too. His email address is ishan_mehta@schatz.senate.gov

From:

To: ishan_mehta@schatz.senate.gov

Date: Friday, March 5, 2021, 04:04 PM HST

Aloha Ishan,

I have forwarded the email I received last Thursday from Hawaiian Telcom after speaking to Auggie, a customer service representative (808-643-000) who advised that he spoke with a Lisa who had left a message for me a couple days earlier in regard to my complaint communication with a representative from KITV news. I was advised by Auggie that my rate would be a \$1 less than what I am paying now, which is \$49.50 a month, hence he quoted me \$48.50 a month and said why wait for one more month at the \$49.50 rate when I could change now? I assumed excise tax would be charged on top of that, but what I received is a the monthly rate is \$55.73. I called back on Monday, 3/1, and spoke with a Nicolaus to complain about the "monthly charge" of \$55.73 and that I was quoted \$48.50, and this rep told me the difference was due to me changing in mid cycle, as my billing period started on the 7th of each month. I told him that the way the email is written does not say that, rather it states the \$55.73 is my "monthly rate." He said to wait until my next bill and all would be fine. We shall see.

Please find attached the last page of my current regular bill that shows the \$245 per month charge with the \$195.05 credit that was never verbalized to me when I first called to sign up for this service. Rather, I was told the cost was about \$50 a month. As stated on the phone, my worry is for those who cannot advocate for themselves or have no one to advocate for them; for those who may be older and getting dementia; for those who have signed up for automatic payments and have never seen one of these paper bills with the \$245 amount that will go into effect when their "promo" expires. Many in our subdivision are low income and poverty stricken. We also are on a fixed income that has required me to find work part time just to make ends meet, and I'm 69 years old. If indeed, Hawaiian Telcom acquired a federal grant to install the fiber optics in the Hawaiian Acres neighborhood, I just cannot imagine that the grant would allow Hawaiian Telcom to charge more per month in this low income area than it charges in any other area of our state. I will make my complaint with the FCC this weekend. I thank you for helping us be an advocate for those who are low income. I hope you do not mind me providing your name and email address to others who are in the same situation as I am.

Aloha nui loa,