



**NARAL**  
Pro-Choice America

September 25, 2007

Lowell McAdam  
President & CEO  
1 Verizon Way  
Baskin Ridge, NJ 07920

Dear Mr. McAdam:

On behalf of more than one million activists and supporters of NARAL Pro-Choice America, I am asking Verizon Wireless to end its policy that blocks our organization from communicating with members who have voluntarily signed up to receive information from us through text messaging.

Last week, in response to an application submitted by our vendor, your company's legal department informed us that both of our short code applications were rejected because *"VZW Legal does not accept issue-oriented (abortion, war, etc) programs-only basic, general politician-related campaigns (Mitt Romney, Hillary Clinton, etc)."* When our astonished vendor requested additional information, your legal department sent this response: *"For now VZW will not accept programs that are issue-oriented from lobbyist [sic], PACs, or any organization that seeks to promote an agenda or distribute content that, in its discretion, may be seen as controversial or unsavory to any of our users. General informational campaigns about candidates are acceptable to the extent that the content involved is, in VZW's sole discretion, not issue-oriented or controversial in nature."*

The principle at stake here is simple. Verizon Wireless' customers have every right to decide what actions to take with their phones, regardless of their political views. Verizon Wireless has unilaterally deemed the war and abortion as "unsavory" or "controversial" issues. There is nothing illegal about discussing these topics. Americans have sharp disagreements on these issues, but they would agree that Verizon Wireless does not have the "sole authority" to determine if or when customers receive information they voluntarily request. We work on a wide range of health-related issues, such as contraception and sex education. Would Verizon Wireless censor messages on these topics in the same way you're censoring abortion?

Furthermore, Verizon Wireless is the only cellular carrier that has denied NARAL Pro-Choice America's application to establish a text message short code. Your corporate censorship affects millions of Americans since Verizon Wireless controls nearly 25 percent of the cellular market. It is especially disturbing since text messaging is rapidly becoming the most common form of communication, especially among younger voters.

As an advocate for citizen involvement in our democracy, I find your censorship outrageous.

Finally, NARAL Pro-Choice America is a Verizon Wireless customer— what part of our monthly payment is “controversial” or “unsavory”?

NARAL Pro-Choice America and its more than one million activists and supporters across the country look forward to receiving confirmation that Verizon Wireless will end this policy that blocks our organization from communicating with our members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Keenan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Nancy Keenan  
President

NARAL Pro-Choice America