

November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

We need your help in restoring the TUSF. We understand that the fund may need an  
Addressee: It would take the PUC 6-12 months to do so, maybe longer depending on the  
timing for passing updated legislation. Operating for nearly a year at a 70% reduction in  
state subsidy is not sustainable and this is not in the best interest of rural Texans. For DTS

Dear Representative of the People of the State of Texas, I am writing to you today to help bridge until the PUC or the  
legislature finalizes changes to the TUSF. My suggestion would be to allocate a bit of the  
DialToneServices, LP provides telecommunications service utilizing satellite phones. DTS is  
the only provider in Texas licensed to provide satellite service and receive Texas Universal  
Service Funds (TUSF) to offset the significant cost to the customer. DTS has approximately  
3,000 customers in Texas and one-third are first responders. Many of the others are  
individuals and businesses (ranches and oil field workers) who are extremely remote, and  
for whom landline and cellular options are unavailable. Many are near the border and use  
their phones for safety reasons. Because of the reductions in TUSF support beginning in  
January of 2021, DTS has recently advised customers that it must increase rates (subject to  
the limitations in the law) to stay in business and continue to provide service. Enclosed you  
will find our notice of a rate increase sent to our customers in West Texas along with a small  
sample of written responses from them. It took an effort on our customers' part to share  
their stories and the dire need for our service and I urge you to take a minute to read about  
what their life is like out there. Reading these letters may make you a bit angry about the  
situation DTS and its customers are in, but bless their hearts, these are good people. DTS is  
not the only rural communications provider in this situation. It is affecting virtually all  
people living in truly rural Texas.


For fifteen years, we have been providing these folks with a much needed and valuable  
phone service, especially access to emergency services where it was previously unavailable.  
DTS has been able to provide this affordable service by participating in the Texas Universal  
Service Fund (TUSF) program since our inception in 2006. As you may know the TUSF  
program is no longer viable and neither is our business. The rate increase we put into effect  
is only a short-term band aid but will not allow us to survive in the future.

Dear DTS,

It is difficult to know quite how to start about this very disappointing situation. A large part of our family's decision to buy, manage and build on a very remote West Texas property, on the Southern boundary of Terrell County - was the satellite phone program. I am a biologist and frequently work the property alone, on foot, often at night because of the heat. Rough, deep canyons, venomous snakes, scorpions, Africanized bees, you name it - everything on this property is designed to stab, poison or otherwise injure you. It's over 22 miles just to reach the first paved road. With our government now turning a blind eye, the deep canyons on our property are being used by drug mules from Mexico. Long, long lines of physically fit young Mexican men and women. I have excellent game camera video of them with their backpacks full of narcotics, strolling carefree through our canyons in broad daylight. The only way to reach the authorities in case of an altercation, weapon's fire, etc - is by sat phone. In addition to the physical dangers of the landscape, I have an autoimmune disease that can cause all kinds of dangerous physical things to go wrong in a hurry. Insect stings of all kinds have to be closely watched for reaction. Over the years we have managed all these hurdles, avoided all sorts of problems and were able to live with a safety net all because of the sat phone. I don't have a problem with the service being high priced. The problem I have is that we have build a working operation with our sat phone, it was a great solution, priced where we could afford it and one of the few "aide" programs that targeted people actually trying to better their situation, often a physically challenging situation. To suddenly take the service away from folks that have built a big part of their lives around it is in a word, deplorable. We live on mostly fixed income now that we are retired, covid has taken it's toll, now this. I realize that DTS has no responsibility in this but it should be strongly communicated that the price hike will undoubtedly bring misfortune to individuals dependent upon the service but who can no longer afford it. Though not an intentional "bait and switch," the outcome is just as damaging.

In conclusion, we will unfortunately be among those that can no longer afford the service at the new rates. We would be in your debt for any alternative service you might suggest or any other lifeline you might throw our way.

with best regards,

  
Oct 14, 2021  
10:00 PM



Dial Tone Services

2201 Denton Drive, Suite 109

Austin, Texas 78758

Attn. Mr. Bill Dorran, President

Dear Sir,

I currently have two DTS satellite phones. I ranch in rural northwest Val Verde County, Texas near Pandale, Texas. I am asking for consideration to retain the current billing rates for the circumstances listed below.

We have utilized the satellite phones to summon emergency services a few times when an ATV accident occurred in the Pandale, Texas area. Several of these were serious and aid was summoned from nearby Ozona, Texas fairly quickly.

I purposely acquired two satellite phones for myself and my wife. My wife has several existing medical conditions. Diabetes, Lupus, and hypertension. As we travel back and forth to the ranch there are several areas with no cell phone coverage. The ability for her to communicate with myself or emergency services is imperative.

As for myself I am a Senior citizen. My health is relative good but in the event of a vehicle failure or incident I currently have the ability to contact family or emergency services. At some points on our ranch the walking distance is approximately ten (10) miles. During the hot summer temperatures this creates an undue burden. I have made this trek before but not at my current age.

Lastly, we are a border county and have been affected by the current border crisis. Just less than two (2) weeks ago I encountered a non-citizen in distress. He had been abandoned by the larger group with whom he was traveling with. Additionally, he was assaulted and left behind. With the current satellite phone I was able to summon United States Border Patrol who responded with several agents to prevent a difficult situation from becoming worse.

Plus I was able to summon my wife who was on the ranch bring needed water and food for the young man in distress.

In closing I budget everything for the operation of the ranch. By more than doubling the monthly cost of service may cause us to delete one satellite phone and place us in some situations that are not favorable for our health and safety and the health and safety of others.

Hopefully the State of Texas will resume funding for this worthwhile service. In the meantime I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,



**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Subject:** DTS Service charge changes  
**Date:** September 15, 2021 at 10:12:31 AM PDT  
**To:** [bdorran@dialtonetexas.com](mailto:bdorran@dialtonetexas.com)

Dear Mr. Dorran

Thank you for the return call concerning the changes to my DTS Account [REDACTED], [REDACTED]. Your notice referred to the State of Texas deleting assistance for rural service providers and subsequently, your customers.

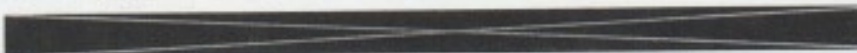
Being one of those Rural Customers, this has been a very important part of my life and business. I sell real estate and live just north of Big Bend National Park. There are nothing but bad dirt / rock roads that can eat up 2-3 tires in one trip to the backcountry. It can be expensive, but mainly it can be dangerous to become stranded with multiple flat tires or mechanical issues. Cell service is only around the community areas, and spotty at that. Our population has grown over the years that I have had my Sat Phones. I use one and share the other with friends, customers, and folks that have found themselves needing the protection the Sat Phone provider. Areas all over the West side of Texas are in need of this service. Even going along Interstate 10, there are stretches that have NO Cell Service, and the Sat Phones are the only reliable communication device that is essentially fool proof. The general access roads all over the West Texas area have dead areas. I know this for a fact coming out of the Big Bend Area and going Anywhere.

And, as a P.S. I am 78 years young, still working and going out by myself, and I have friends of similar age doing the same thing. WE ALL Need our Sat Phones. Please take that into consideration as well.

With, Regards.... [REDACTED]

—  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Phone: [REDACTED] Office 9AM-8PM  
Home [REDACTED]

10-11-21

Please be advised that I have two  
Accounts. 

I live in a rural setting next to the border with Mexico, seven and one half miles of river frontage on the Rio Grande river. Our county has seen fit to have open borders and this is considered to be very dangerous. I and my employees are armed every time we leave the house. With no cell in site it is of the upmost importance that we be able to communicate. This is a very important part of our safety and I believe this would certainly be a special circumstance or need. Your help in this matter would be greatly appreciated. There is no cell service in the area!!

Thanks







DTS customer service,

I received a letter stating there would be an increase on my 2 satellite phone lines to \$59.25 per line. I live in West Texas with no available home phone service or internet and these phones are our only means of communication while at home and while one of us goes to town.

My husband is a disabled veteran with his benefits being our income. This more than 50% increase would take up a large portion of our budget, potentially making it cost prohibitive.

We would appreciate the ability to retain our current pricing of \$24.95 per line so that we can continue to have communications when needed. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Account number:

[REDACTED]

