

**SB846\_Hettleman\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Shelly Hettleman

Position: FAV

SHELLY HETTLEMAN  
Legislative District 11  
Baltimore County

Chair, Rules Committee  
Budget and Taxation Committee

*Subcommittees*  
Capital Budget  
Health and Human Services  
Chair, Pensions

*Joint Committees*  
Senate Chair, Audit and Evaluation  
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TESTIMONY OF SENATOR SHELLY HETTLEMAN  
SB 846 - BUSINESS REGULATION - CELLULAR PHONE CARRIERS –  
SERVICE CONTRACT REQUIREMENT

Madam Chair, Mr. Vice Chair, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, I am writing to express my strong support for **SB 846 Business Regulation - Cellular Phone Carriers - Service Contract Requirement**.

This summer, I went to my cell phone carrier's store to purchase a new cell phone, intending to meet with staff to ensure that my data was successfully transferred from the old to the new one. I was aware that my husband was the primary contact on the account and had all of the appropriate passwords and information for our shared plan. As a result, I was unable to purchase a new phone or make any changes to the account without him being physically present. When I offered to get him on the phone or have him share his information directly, I was rebuffed. I felt dissatisfied, discouraged and patronized.

Unfortunately, I am not alone in this experience. After posting about the incident on social media, *many* others expressed frustration with facing similar circumstances. Several people shared stories of trying to make changes to their account or buy a new phone only to be met with the requirement that their primary account holder must be present in person to do so. For some this resulted in delays to their account modifications or an inability to buy a new phone altogether until the primary user was available. One individual even detailed how, following her divorce, she was unable to take herself off of the account as a secondary user. She stated that the phone company tried to urge her to make a new account, thereby forfeiting her loyalty discount as a member of over 10 years.

Under current policy, an existing customer is limited or unable to modify the contract without the agreement of the primary holder, reportedly, as a means to prevent fraud. I offered to share the same personal information as they had of my husband, but that was not good enough. This poses numerous issues to family members or individuals who are not listed on the account as the primary user. Instances in which the primary account holder is unavailable due to travel, illness, separation, or other circumstances can leave secondary users without the ability to access essential services, upgrade devices, or manage their own needs. This policy disproportionately affects spouses, family members, and individuals in shared plans by restricting account management and financial independence.

SB 846 requires a cellular phone carrier to include an option in the service contract that allows more than one individual who is a customer of record to the service contract to alter, modify, or cancel the service contract without the agreement of the other customers of record if all of the customers of record agree in writing to the option on execution of the service contract. This eliminates unnecessary barriers to accessing plans and services, ensuring that shared account holders have the autonomy to manage their own services without hurdles.

The current policies are infantilizing, problematic, and unintentionally sexist. SB 846 will ensure that shared contract holders have the opportunity to make changes to their account, breaking down these barriers and ensuring equitable access to phone services. Therefore, I urge a favorable report from the Finance Committee and thank you for your time.

# **SB846\_SponsorAmendment\_553723**

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AMENDMENTS  
PREPARED  
BY THE  
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE  
SERVICES

27 FEB 25  
10:53:39

BY: Senator Hettleman  
(To be offered in the Finance Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 846  
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 2, strike “**Service Contract Requirement**” and substitute “**Authorized Users**”; strike beginning with “include” in line 3 down through “circumstances” in line 5 and substitute “allow a certain customer to have the option to designate other individuals as authorized users on the customer’s account and to allow an authorized user to take certain actions in connection with the account”; and in line 6, strike “service contracts” and substitute “authorized users”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 1, strike in their entirety lines 16 through 22, inclusive; and after line 22, insert:

“A CELLULAR PHONE CARRIER SHALL ALLOW:

(1) THE CUSTOMER OF RECORD WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENT ON AN ACCOUNT TO DESIGNATE OTHER INDIVIDUALS AS AUTHORIZED USERS ON THE ACCOUNT; AND

(2) AN INDIVIDUAL DESIGNATED AS AN AUTHORIZED USER ON AN ACCOUNT TO PURCHASE SERVICES OR DEVICES OR TO MAKE A CLAIM UNDER ANY SERVICE CONTRACT CONNECTED TO THE ACCOUNT TO THE EXTENT THAT THE AUTHORIZATION EXTENDS TO THE ACTION.”

# **Asurion Informational Testimony on SB 846.pdf**

Uploaded by: Marta Harting

Position: INFO

## **Asurion**

### **Informational Testimony on Senate Bill 846**

**(Business Regulation – Cellular Phone Carriers – Service Contract Requirement)**

**Asurion is a leading provider of device insurance, warranty & support services for cell phones, consumer electronics & home appliances.**

**Asurion appreciates the Sponsor’s desire to increase flexibility for cellular service users who share a common service plan. As currently drafted, however, we are concerned that the bill would have unintended consequences, including the inadvertent effect of actually making it harder for individuals other than the individual responsible for the account to file a claim under a service contract attached to a customer’s account. We stand ready to work with the Sponsor and the Committee on an amendment that would accomplish the intent of the bill and increase flexibility for those on family plans or other multi-line accounts.**