**PENNSYLVANIA**

# **PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

## Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265

Public Meeting held April 7, 2016

Commissioners Present:

Gladys M. Brown, Chairman

Andrew G. Place, Vice Chairman

Pamela A. Witmer

John F. Coleman, Jr.

Robert F. Powelson

Pennsylvania Telecommunications Relay M-00900239

Service Advisory Board

**OPINION AND ORDER**

**BY THE COMMISSION:**

The Pennsylvania Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) is a communications service that offers persons who are hearing, deaf, and hearing or speech impaired, three ways to connect to the service using various means: Traditional Telephone Relay, Video Relay, and Internet Relay. Users who access TRS by telephone simply dial 7-1-1 to connect to a skillfully-trained Communications Assistant, or CA, who follows a strict code of ethics and confidentiality for telephone TRS communications. The CA then relays messages to the other person. TRS is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

By Order entered May 29, 1990, the Commission established the Telecommunications Relay Service Advisory Board (Board) for the purpose of reviewing the success of TRS in Pennsylvania. The Board was also assigned the task of identifying any additional improvements which might need to be implemented to ensure the continued success of the TRS program. The Board is comprised of representatives from the following: the relay service provider (Hamilton Relay);[[1]](#footnote-1) the Pennsylvania Telephone Association; the Commission; the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry’s Office for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing; and representatives from the community of persons who are, or who have experience with, people who are deaf or hard of hearing, or those with language and speech disorders. The Board meets quarterly in Harrisburg and functions as a user group providing guidance in such areas as problem solving and future enhancements. The established term limit of a TRS Board member is two years.

The nominee for the TRS Board for the two-year term ending

January 31, 2018, is A. Kay Tyberg. Ms. Tyberg is a current Board member whose two-year term is expiring. She serves on the TRS Board in various capacities, including Secretary. Ms. Tyberg is a Certified Peer Mentor Consultant - Deaf/HOH Office of Aging Ombudsman – PA, a Deaf Advocate Sign Language Instructor and Committee Chairperson Hearing Loss Association of America – PA Arts & Entertainment Co-Chairperson Public Awareness Lycoming County Chapter (an affiliate of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)). The HLAA is the largest consumer organization in the country for people with hearing loss, providing support, education, advocacy and self-help. Ms. Tyberg has worked as a deaf advocate in Pennsylvania and in other states and has been active in educating hearing parents and late deaf adults about accessibility to TTY/TTD[[2]](#footnote-2), Captioned Telephone and relay services for family members with hearing loss. Ms. Tyberg’s expertise, input, and continued service to the TRS Board would prove beneficial to the TRS Board; **THEREFORE,**

**IT IS ORDERED:**

1. That the nomination of A. Kay Tyberg of the Hearing Loss Association of America-Lycoming County Chapter to the Telecommunications Relay Service Advisory Board for the two-year term ending January 31, 2018, is approved.

2. That Ms. A. Kay Tyberg shall be served with a copy of this Opinion and Order.



**BY THE COMMISSION,**

Rosemary Chiavetta

Secretary

(SEAL)

ORDER ADOPTED: April 7, 2016

ORDER ENTERED: April 7, 2016

1. Hamilton Relay has replaced AT&T as the service provider in Pennsylvania. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “TTY” refers to TeleTYpewriter which is a “[t]ypewriter-style device for communicating over telecom networks. “TDD” refers to Telecommunications Device for the Deaf, which is a machine that employs graphic communication in the transmission of coded signals through a wire or radio.” “TTY/TDD” refers to a unique Telecommunication Device for the Deaf using TTY principles. *See Newton’s Telecom Dictionary,* 20th Ed. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)