

**Remarks Prepared for Delivery by
Kathy Pierce
Hubble Foundation**

**FCC/DOL Workshop on Tower Climber Safety and Injury Prevention
Washington, DC
October 14, 2014**

My name is Kathy Pierce, and I am the mother of Chad Weller.

Chad was a tower technician that took his job very seriously and was very safety conscious; he loved his job. Chad was loved by many; he had a heart of gold and put a smile on everyone's face he came in contact with. He had plans to join the Navy this past summer to serve his country, but tragically on March 19th, 2014, the job my son loved took his life before he could fulfill his dream to be in the Military. Chad didn't have the chance to get married and have children. When Chad died, he left behind two very heart broken sisters and the person that brought life to him, me, his mother. He also left behind many other family members and friends whose lives have been forever changed by his preventable death.

I not only lost my only son, I lost my baby boy, my best friend, and my hero. Losing my Chad has changed my life forever, and I will never be the person I used to be. Chad should have never lost his life that day. His accident could have been prevented simply by:

1. Not being sent up on the tower alone.
2. Not being forced to work on a water tower in hazardous weather conditions; the tower had ice on it and it was raining. And,
3. Chad's equipment had fallen out of the truck earlier in the day and was lost, but the foreman on site had placed Chad in an XL harness when Chad wore a medium and instructed him to climb the tower.

We need to make some serious changes in this industry to stop senseless loss of life.

This workshop shouldn't be just a place to talk, ask, and answer questions. This workshop needs to be a place to start **real** change in the telecommunications industry. This needs to be the place where we honor the lives that are lost and change the industry, where we make it safer so that another mother, sister, brother, father, or friend doesn't lose someone they love.

I'm here today to be the voice for my son, all the fallen climbers and all the tower technicians still out there risking their lives climbing towers to keep everyone in touch worldwide. As a grieving mother, I'm pleading that we all unite together to make a difference.