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Press Release

MassAccess Opposes Verizon Legislative Attempt...Again!

Local Cable Licensing Works and Proposed Legislation Undermines Traditional Cable Licensing Process

Newton, MA, May 4, 2011: **MassAccess**, a membership based organization representing nearly 150 Community Media Centers in Massachusetts, is opposed to a Verizon supported bill expected to be given a committee hearing in the State House on May 18th. MassAccess views Senate Bill S1687 as yet another attempt to introduce legislation, which would limit the timetable and ability of cities and towns to negotiate fair cable contract terms.

MassAccess notes that Verizon has been able to obtain cable licenses in 110 local Massachusetts communities in only a few years, which demonstrates that the current system works.

MassAccess members in those communities acknowledge that Verizon has been a responsible cable provider and has supported the local Community Media Center; however, MassAccess opposes changes to the existing legislative framework that has been so vital in ensuring that all cable operators in the Commonwealth meet their social obligations to the state's citizens, especially those preserving Public, Educational and Governmental ("PEG") Channels to the state's citizens.

MassAccess also believes that Verizon should be offering cable services and PEG everywhere in the state where it offers telephone services.

We are hard pressed to understand why certain major metropolitan areas have not been offered service, despite those areas expressing keen interest in having Verizon as a competitive cable provider.

A similar bill was first introduced in 2009 and never made it out of the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy. Another bill to restructure cable licensing was filed in 2007 and met a similar fate. This year's version mirrors the 2009 Bill and it has found its way onto the docket for the Telecom, Utilities & Energy Committee consideration.

Bill S1687 will have a hearing at 10am in Room A1 at the State House on May 18, 2011.

MassAccess believes that:

- **Current Law Is Very Effective**
- **Verizon Fails To Establish A Predicate For Action – Current Law Has Served Them Well.**
- **Legislative Proposal Weakens Statutorily Mandated Cable Provider Obligations**
- **Legislation Proposes a Timetable That is Not Workable**

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