



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
House of Representatives
State House, Boston 02133-1054

TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY, JR.
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
26TH MIDDLESEX DISTRICT
SOMERVILLE - CAMBRIDGE
TEL: (617) 722-2692
FAX: (617) 722-2822
E-Mail:

Rep.TimothyToomey@hou.state.ma.us

ROOM 166, STATE HOUSE

AUG 10 2006

CABLE TEL

IN DIVISION

August 8, 2006

Alicia Matthews
Director, Cable Television Division
Department of Telecommunications and Energy
One South Station
Boston, MA 02110

Dear Director Matthews,

I am writing to oppose Verizon's petition to shorten the licensing process for cable franchising to 90 days as outlined in its March 16, 2006, filing with the Cable Division of the Department of Telecommunications and Energy.

First, the proposed 90 day timeline for reviewing a 15 year cable license is, at best, far too short, and, at worse, completely and totally unreasonable. To expect a municipality to complete not only all the necessary due diligence and review within 30 days of a public hearing but also the complicated negotiation and eventual approval or disapproval of a license application makes little practical sense. The unreasonably tight deadline also leaves municipalities little ability to take what happens during the negotiations into consideration when assessing applicants.

Further, and of particular concern to my constituents and my office, is the effect of Verizon's petition on lower income residents and public, educational and government access (PEG) television. The loss of community control over the rights of way, which ensures that all community residents receive equal service, is a serious problem. Without community control, national cable providers have little incentive to provide service in less profitable areas.

PEG television would also invariably suffer. Franchise fees are a critical source of funding for PEG television and the loss of that funding could very well cripple local communities' public access television stations.

There is already a sensible and fair approach to competitive licensing. The municipal approach is proven, it benefits the consumer, community and corporation and there is little reason, other than to boost Verizon's earnings, to change the present system.

Thank you for your consideration. If you need any further information, please feel free to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.", written over a printed name and title.

Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
26th Middlesex/ Vice Mayor, Cambridge