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What side will you take when AT&T expects cable PEG money to be paid for their hook-up

Tragic.

A victory for good government is overturned because of a well funded marketing campaign that included fraud, in that AT&T pretended to be a consumer organization. Real consumer advocates do not have the resources to fight such wrongs and must rely on our government and courts. We had good government - or at least it appeared we did until this week.

Now that you have been wrongly persuaded by economic threats - will there be any consequences for AT&T's bad behavior. PA 07-253 is very flawed and will give AT&T more opportunity to take more than it provides. Will you be telling the DPUC to favor AT&T in the developing of related regs as well?

Throughout the entire time-line of public discourse about U-verse, which includes both regulatory & court proceedings, at&t has funded a marketing campaign that presents itself as a consumer choice organization (MoreConsumerChoice.org and wewantchoice.com). at&t ran thru the TV4US campaign auto-generated letter to DPUC that did some AG bashing and were pro-AT&T. This campaign strategically located TV4US ADs near articles on the U-verse debate. This polluted the information integrity associated with this market competition issue.

The issue is about profit, not about consumer price. It is rooted in the tax and regulatory differences between providers of telephone, TV and Internet. All corporations prefer being Internet providers because they avoid paying for rights-of-way and requirements for universal service. The marketing and legal fees for this 'Internet provider campaign' disguised as 'for the people' has been massive.

The new video provider law PA 07-253 literally sponsored by at&t was the 1st cable related legislation to get through our State process since the early 1990s. This is not because consumers have not sought change. And it certainly is not because it is good reform. Broadcast regulations currently before the FCC is what is actually needed to reduce consumer costs and potentially allow for media ownership diversity.

Similarly, new technology vs. archaic laws and regulations are at the heart of this battle. New technology is being used to miss inform consumers.

There are lots of connections to Cable TV costs that are not obvious. Cable costs are directly tied to sports broadcaster contracts which are tied to how much players are paid. So how about a sports analogy - level playing field. Providers need fair competition and consumers need truth in advertising and the people need Government for the people, not the profiteers.

Cable providers will rightfully be seeking franchise regulatory relief based on this outcome. And as the consumer advocate it will be difficult to get improvements for senior discounts, no or low cost return lines for PEG's that need to relocate, router technology improvement or reinstatement of tech training or coordinator for schools.

Your decision to support AT&T has a long reach.

Susan Adele Huizenga
Chairman CACSCC (7TownTV.Org)

<representing the interests of approx. 63,000 cable subscribers in Branford, North Branford, East Haven, North Haven, Wallingford, Guilford and Madison.>