



09/06/2005

## State representative defends Senate bill

In the Aug. 22 article titled, "Senate bill threatens local cable control," Hartland Township's cable administrator Felicia Jamieson and Alliance for Community (ACM) executive director Anthony Riddle make a series of false claims regarding the projected effects of the Senate's Broadband Investment and Consumer Choice Act. As a state representative and former SBC employee who had been following this legislation closely, I'd like to set the record straight.

Contrary to the article's prime assertion that the bill would take away local government control over public rights-of-way, the Broadband Choice Act does, in fact, enable communities to continue to assess fees for use of local public rights-of-way, which will add beneficial new revenue streams. Also, far from threatening access to local education and government programming as ACM's Riddle suggests, the Broadband Choice Act ensures this important programming thrives. It also establishes clear consumer protections that protect us all from fraud and abuse.

To characterize Senators Ensign and McCain's broadband bill as "anti-competitive" and suggest that the simplest way to jumpstart video competition is by forcing providers to navigate a maze of thousands of community-by-community approvals is both illogical and counterproductive. This broadband bill rightly presumes that consumers nationwide would like more digital television choices and strong consumer protections. It puts the government on the side of encouraging investment in new choices, rather than erecting artificial barriers to its arrival.

The Broadband Choice Act boldly proposes a plan to unleash billions of dollars of investment in new services like Internet television, or IPTV, that will give consumers unprecedented choices. I hope lawmakers - at the local, state and national level - will embrace this landmark legislation, and in doing so, help speed modern communications advances to the residents of Oakland County and beyond.

Fran Amos  
State Representative  
43rd District