



Keep Us Connected

PROTECT THE PUBLIC INTEREST in HB 1500

Background

Under the guise of “competition” (often echoed in Springfield), AT&T (formerly SBC), the company that dominates telephone, cellular and Internet, wants to get even bigger by enlisting the Illinois General Assembly to help eliminate local municipal authority to regulate cable TV franchises.

At its core, AT&T-backed legislation, Illinois House Bill 1500, as originally written, *abandons* long-standing commitments made to local governments and their residents to meet community needs, *discriminates* against entire neighborhoods by allowing AT&T to only serve areas it chooses, *threatens* Public, Educational and Governmental (PEG) access programming, *weakens* consumer protections, and *dumps* local communications networks that support public safety, schools, emergency services and municipal communications.

Negotiations are currently underway on an amendment to HB 1500.

What We Support

The **Keep Us Connected** coalition supports video franchising laws that:

- **Require build-out to all neighborhoods in a community.**
- **Protect PEG Access by ensuring carriage of existing and future PEG stations with adequate funding to operate.**
- **Maintain local government’s control over its rights of way, including the right to create communications networks.**
- **Protect consumers with meaningful competition and strong customer service standards.**
- **Maintain a free and open Internet.**

Who We Are

Keep Us Connected is a coalition of Illinois nonprofit organizations, municipalities, educational institutions, and PEG Access stations committed to protecting the public interest in Illinois telecommunications legislation.