

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

Bad proposed law

March 23, 2007

As Rep. James Brosnahan stated in his letter ["Cable monopoly strangles Illinoisans," March 15], the goal of House Bill 1500 is laudable: to encourage competition in the Illinois cable market and lower prices.

Unfortunately, HB 1500 makes a bad situation worse. The AT&T-sponsored law is an effort to avoid any build-out requirements or consumer protection standards that are critical to ensure meaningful competition. That's why Illinois PIRG, Consumers Union and other public interest groups oppose HB 1500.

Cable competition is needed in Illinois and a benefit to all consumers. As the General Assembly considers how best to achieve that goal, let's hope the voices of consumers are not drowned out by the din of AT&T and Comcast lobbyists in Springfield. The General Assembly should reject any legislation that does not contain a reasonable buildout requirement to all Illinois residents and protection of basic consumer protections.

Brian Imus, state director, Illinois PIRG (Public Interest Research Group)