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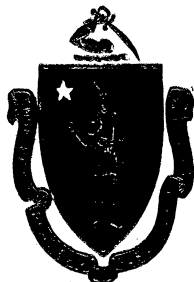
I was troubled that this bill passed in the House without opportunity for debate by legislators, and I have asked the Senate President to ensure that members have the opportunity to debate measure when it comes up in the Senate and to take a roll call vote on it. If I can be of further assistance on this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Warren E. Tolman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Warren E. Tolman

cc: City Councillors



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
**MASSACHUSETTS SENATE**  
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

**SENATOR WARREN E. TOLMAN**

MIDDLESEX AND SUFFOLK  
DISTRICT  
ROOM 424  
TEL. (617) 722-1280  
FAX (617) 722-1069

RECEIVED BY  
OFFICE OF CITY CLERK  
97 JUL 10 AM 10 08  
CAMBRIDGE MA.

COMMITTEES:  
TAXATION (CHAIR)  
BANKS AND BANKING  
POST AUDIT AND OVERSIGHT  
STATE ADMINISTRATION

2 July 1997

The Honorable the City Council  
c/o Office of the City Clerk  
City of Cambridge  
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Councillors:

Thank you for forwarding to me the Cambridge City Council's resolution concerning legislation which would regulate the licensing conditions for cities and towns who seek to license additional cable franchises. The bill in question (H.901, AN Act Relative to Licenses for the Construction and Operation of CATV Systems) passed the House on a voice vote this past May and is currently in the Senate Committee on Steering and Policy, waiting to come before the full Senate.

I believe that this legislation, as currently drafted, would unfairly protect cable companies—who currently enjoy monopoly control over local markets—from the competition which was an intended result of the federal Telecommunications Act. The bill would prohibit cities and towns who grant additional CATV licenses from doing so “under terms or conditions more favorable or less burdensome to the applicant than those required under the existing CATV license.” It seems clear to me that this provision would severely limit a city or town's ability to negotiate new licenses, thus keeping potential competitors out of the market. I understand that in states where such legislation has passed it has in fact worked to protect existing monopolies.

I believe that cities and towns should retain the ability to grant additional licenses under whatever conditions they choose. I would also point out that the experience of cities and towns who have granted additional licenses has been a happy one: increased competition has led to lower prices and more responsive service from all companies. Moreover, the total market share of all the companies has gone up, thereby increasing revenues received by the city or town from cable fees.

Consent Communications #18

S-474

Communication was received from Senator Warren E. Tolman, transmitting his appreciation for the City Council resolution concerning legislation which would regulate the licensing conditions for cities and towns who seek to license additional cable franchises.

In City Council August 4, 1997

**PLACED ON FILE**