



City of Fall River, Massachusetts

14

LEO O. PELLETIER
VICE PRESIDENT
CITY COUNCIL

2001 JAN 25 P 1:43

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

January 22, 2001

Dear Cambridge City Council:

At a meeting of the Fall River City Council held on January 16, 2001, following a motion made and seconded, the attached resolution was unanimously adopted.

This resolution deals specifically with the regulation of cable television rates. I have personally received numerous calls from residents expressing their displeasure with this situation. These rates were deregulated by the Federal Telecommunication Act of 1996. I believe it is important for communities to work together in regulating these rates. I am requesting at this time that your governing body place this item on a future agenda for a vote.

I ask that you keep me informed as to what steps are being taken in regards to this matter. I can be reached at 508-678-0209 (home) or 508-320-9571 (cell phone). If you have any information that you may wish to send to me, you may fax me at 508-324-2211.

Thanking you in advance for your anticipated cooperation.

Sincerely,
Leo O. Pelletier
Leo O. Pelletier (cm)
City Councilor

/cm

encl(s):

The Herald News

Tuesday, January 16, 2001

www.heraldnews.com

For HOME DELIVERY, call 676-2515

Pelletier wants cable TV reined in

By JAMES FINLAW
Herald News Staff Reporter

FALL RIVER — Fed up with rising cable television costs, City Council Vice President Leo O. Pelletier is preparing to take aim at what he believes lies at the root of the price increases — the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996.

At tonight's City Council meeting, Pelletier will ask his fellow councilors to vote to adopt a resolution requesting the federal government to re-regulate cable television rates. The telecommunications act deregulated rates in 1996.

Pelletier's resolution was spurred by the recent announce-

ment that the city's cable rate would be increasing next month.

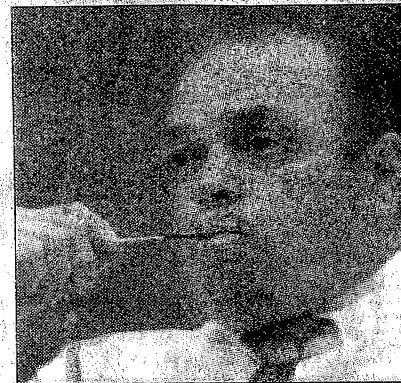
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Supporters of the bill claimed that deregulation would expand consumer choices, and potentially lower cable prices. The theory was that deregulation would force cable companies to eventually lower their prices, as competition

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The bill's detractors dismissed

the contention, arguing that the cable competition wouldn't materialize. Instead, they believed high-

er rates would result, as a handful of giant cable companies would buy up the competition and come to dominate the cable market.

Nearly five years after the bill passed and was signed into law by President Clinton, Pelletier believes the detractors were right, and that something has to be done to curtail the ever-escalating costs.

"They are the people who changed it, and we are going back to them and saying this isn't right, the prices didn't go down. Let's regulate this," said Pelletier.

Pelletier realizes a City Council resolution "probably doesn't mean much," when it comes to convincing the federal

government to re-regulate cable rates.

However, he hopes the resolution serves as a sort of spark that will trigger support for his idea from community leaders and legislators throughout the state.

"We have to get other communities and our congressmen to know everybody is displeased," he said.

"It is something we could mail to a lot of communities, telling them we are trying to regulate cable television because of the prices, and that we'd like to have them come on board," he explained.

► Turn to TV, Page A5

TV: Pelletier wants rates regulated

From Page A1

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Currently, Fall River is bound to AT&T by a 10-year contract that was signed by former Mayor Daniel E. Bogan in 1991. While the contract expires in 2002, freeing the city to negotiate with other cable service providers, it does not seem likely that the city would be able to lure a competing cable company to the city.

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While he understands it may be difficult or impossible to convince the state's congressmen and senators to fight to have the historic Telecommunications Act reworked, Pelletier thinks there may be enough angry cable subscribers to compel them to do so.

"If they're receptive to it, maybe they'll file something. If they are cool on it, we'll have to get more cities and towns to pass resolutions like this," said Pelletier.

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Pelletier said he intends to mail the resolution to communities like New Bedford, Somerset and Worcester to gauge their interest in joining the fight. If he finds that leaders in those communities have experienced the same outcry from citizens angered by the increase, he will encourage them to spur their legislators to take action.

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► Turn to **CABLE**, Page A5

Cable: Council OKs request for regulation

From Page A1

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Gustafson said the resolution will serve to get the word out, and possibly draw other communities into Fall River's corner.

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Councilor Pat Casey agreed with Gustafson's assessment.

"If everyone is working together, it certainly will be easier to get this done," she said.

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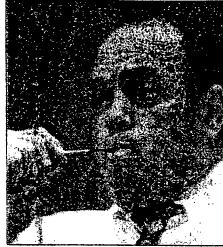
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(Councillor Leo O. Pelletier)

WHEREAS, many complaints have been received from the residents of the City of Fall River, regarding cable television rate increases that seem to occur much too often, and

WHEREAS, these rates are increased without the benefit of public hearings or input, and

WHEREAS, cable television rates were deregulated by the Federal Telecommunication Act of 1996; and

WHEREAS, said deregulation has not resulted in increased cable competition or reduced cable rates; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Fall River requests that the Federal Government, through the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), re-regulate cable television rates in order to protect consumers from rate increases.

In City Council January 16, 2001
Adopted

Approved January 18, 2001
Edward M. Lambert, Jr., Mayor

A true copy. Attest:

Carol A. Valcourt

City Clerk

42S

Consent Communication #14

Communication was received from Leo O. Pelletier, Fall River City Councilor, transmitting a resolution adopted unanimously regarding the regulation of cable television rates.

In City Council January 29, 2001

PLACED ON FILE