



Town of Douglas

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The Honorable John F. Kerry
304 Russell Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

June 6, 2006

Dear Senator Kerry:

Cities and towns across Massachusetts and the nation are facing a mounting attack on their existing local video franchising authority. Several bills moving through Congress would significantly alter or eviscerate the ability of local governments to enter into and enforce local cable franchise agreements, and to manage and collect fees for the use of local rights of way.

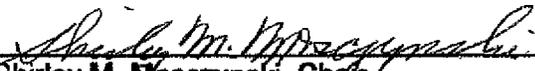
In the Senate, Senator Ted Stevens of Alaska has introduced S. 2686, the Communications, Consumers' Choice and Broadband Deployment Act of 2006. While this bill purports to bring about competition and lower prices to the cable market, in reality, it preempts the very local authority that ensures that the neighborhood you live in would actually get competition and lower prices.

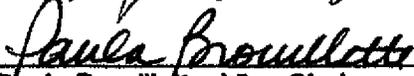
As currently written, the Stevens bill undermines local franchising enforcement and compliance authority, threatens local budgets, limits the benefit of broadband-video competition to a few well-to-do neighborhoods, weakens provisions that ensure video providers meet each community's needs and interests, and undermines the ability of local governments to protect their residents and respond to cable customer service complaints.

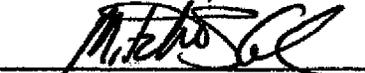
While industry lobbyists claim this is about competition, their business model and past practices show that it is really about profits at local government's and taxpayer's expense.

Therefore, we strongly urge you to oppose the Stevens bill and any other attempt to preempt local control over video franchising decisions. Thank you.

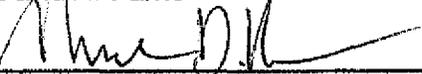
Sincerely,
DOUGLAS BOARD OF SELECTMEN


Shirley M. Moczynski, Chair


Paula Brouillette, Vice Chair


Mitchell S. Cohen


David A. Furno


Michael D. Hughes

x Sent 6-7-06 JA