

Letters to the Editors

Be wary of move to alter franchising

Your recent story "Bill would shift cable franchising rights to state" (Feb. 15) gave some dubious credibility to the telephone companies' push for legislation repealing local franchising rules which have ensured near-universal deployment of broadband technologies throughout Tennessee.

The president and the Democratic leadership have enunciated goals of universal deployment of broadband, goals the civil rights community shares.

This is particularly important given our nation's need to remain globally competitive, nurture young entrepreneurs and promote opportunity for all. Local franchise rules are one of America's only national broadband policies — policies some seek to vilify.

Local franchises foster competition and easily welcome

new entrants, such as phone companies seeking to be the fourth or fifth video provider in most markets.

Companies frequently admit to Wall Street that they are "very successful now in getting franchising."

Don't hold your breath expecting dramatic price cuts from telephone entry into a competitive marketplace.

Bell executives admit that they will not engage in a price war with cable companies.

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