

## **Soddy-Daisy Fighting AT&T Bill**

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City Manager Janice Cagle led the passing by the Soddy-Daisy Commission of a resolution opposing the Competitive Cable and Video Services Act in Tennessee, which would allow AT&T to provide Internet cable services to the whole state under one agreement. Many municipalities see this as “sidestepping local government and going straight to the state.”

A meeting to answer questions was held for AT&T and local municipalities March 23. City Manager Cagle said, “When we got down to the questions of protecting our franchise fees and our rights of way...those questions were not adequately answered.”

Soddy-Daisy is concerned that AT&T will build its lines in Chattanooga and ignore the less densely populated areas in parts of Soddy-Daisy. It also worries that under a state agreement the firm will not be as open to donating its services to local public use such as school and municipal meetings or announcements.

Comcast, the sole current cable provider in the Soddy-Daisy area, signed franchise agreements with local cities individually, which Soddy-Daisy says gives it more control.

City Manager Cagle said the Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) “(does) not believe (the Competitive Cable and Video Services Act) will be beneficial to the cities of Tennessee.” MTAS backs passing such an opposition resolution and encouraged all Tennessee cities to do so, though City Manager Cagle said that if it looks like the act will pass in Nashville MTAS will lobby there to make sure the proper wording is adopted.

Commissioner Jim Adams said AT&T is tempting rural areas with \$1 billion to be divided among rural counties. He says those counties want that money but that AT&T is threatening to give the money to Georgia if Tennessee does not pass the act.