

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Statement by Stacey Briggs, Executive Director, Tennessee Cable
Telecommunications Association on the AT&T's Failed Statewide Cable Franchise**

"The Tennessee Cable Telecommunications Association is pleased legislation crafted by AT&T to dismantle the local franchising agreement system failed to advance in the General Assembly. It would have dramatically changed a system that is working just fine, that allows for AT&T and other companies to compete in Memphis, Nashville, Clarksville, Cleveland, Knoxville and Bristol – right now, today, without a new law.

The current rules for entry into the market are reasonable and they exist to protect consumers, public rights of way and to ensure access to all citizens in a community. These would have been largely stripped away if AT&T had its way. The result would have been a system of cherry-picking and profit-based discrimination that might be good for AT&T shareholders but really bad for Tennesseans. At a time of rapid technological advance, we should find ways to expand access, not restrict it.

This new law would have also given AT&T competitive advantages over our members, companies that have invested heavily in Tennessee communities over many years. We welcome AT&T's entry into Tennessee cities, but it must be on terms fair to all providers and in a way that does not strip consumer and taxpayer protections."

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