

## Brief Comparison of Proposed Cable Franchising Bill and Current Law

### BENEFITS PROVIDED BY LAW UNDER THE CURRENT LOCAL FRANCHISING SYSTEM

--The City and the company must TALK and hold PUBLIC HEARINGS prior to the issuance of a cable television license

--The company is expected build out a system to serve the entire City

--There are minimum customer service standards and a local mechanism for solving complaints through the Cable Advisory Board

--There is negotiated support and local control of the Public, Government and Educational channels. Three channels are currently provided and more can be obtained through meeting negotiated terms.

### PROPOSED BILL

--The License is issued by the Department of Telecommunications and Energy with NO input from the community

--There is NO requirement to build out the entire community. "Poorer" areas can be bypassed, leaving part of the City unable to reap the benefits of competition.

--Customer service standards are abolished and all complaints are handled through a state agency

--Bill deducts support money to go to the state. Cities with less than 50,000 residents only get two channels. Company can take back channels if not used a minimum of 8 hours per day for non-repeat programming. No provision for obtaining additional channel space.

*Compiled by Karen Hayden, Methuen*

