

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF VIDEO COMPETITION EVERYWHERE**

**WHEREAS**, It is the mission Chatham County to preserve and protect the rights of all its citizens;

**WHEREAS**, the existing federal and local video franchising rules have resulted in a \$100 billion investment in advanced telecommunications services nationwide and formed the basis for a national policy of broadband;

**WHEREAS**, public policies that encourage the deployment of broadband everywhere could result in a \$500 billion boost to the economy and 1.2 million jobs at a time when municipal budgets and economic opportunities are lean;

**WHEREAS**, the local franchising authority strongly supports the anti-discrimination provisions of the 1984 Cable Act that have ensured against a 19<sup>th</sup> century world of digital haves and have-nots and ensured that Americans of all incomes, races and backgrounds can have equal access to television and broadband service as the information and communication that it provides becomes more essential in our daily lives;

**WHEREAS**, because this bipartisan anti-discrimination provision has been effective in ensuring the robust build-out of broadband networks, and in protecting against cherry picking of communities, the provision should be preserved by Congress and the States applied both to existing video service providers and now entrants into video marketplace;

**WHEREAS**, some telecommunications companies that now seek to enter the video marketplace are attempting to gain competitive advantage through federal and state preemption of local authority and are seeking to undermine the anti-discrimination and build-out requirements that have been bipartisan cornerstone of our telecommunications laws for decades;

**WHEREAS**, the local franchising authority wants to encourage competition for telephone, broadband, and video services, recognize that competition for such services is growing rapidly, and ensure that these new competitive services are available to all its citizens;

**WHEREAS**, new entrants into video marketplace no unreasonable barriers to entry as federal law expressly provides that video franchises are not exclusive and municipalities have franchised numerous second video providers throughout the county;

**WHEREAS**, excluding local elected officials from franchise process as some telecommunications carriers suggest would be harmful to residents who use local franchise rules to ensure that video services are provided to everyone and that public safety, consumer protection and other community needs are met;

**WHEREAS**, local franchising authority agrees that government policies should not determine winners and losers in the marketplace and thus the rules governing local franchises, including rules regarding the build-out of networks, should apply to all video providers equally; and

**WHEREAS**, the 109<sup>th</sup> United States Congress is currently considering various legislative proposals that would drastically limit or abolish the important role of local of local government and the non-discrimination provisions of the 1984 Cable Act; and


**WHEREAS**, a number of states are considering various legislative proposals that would also limit or abolish the important role of local government in franchising, protecting the interests of all its citizens and the non-discrimination provisions of the 1984 Cable Act and promoting competition.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the local franchising authority urges Congress to reject the intentions of such legislative proposals, including S. 1349 and H.R. 3146, the "Video Choice Act of 2005",


**BE IT RESOLVED**, the local franchising urges state legislatures to reject legislative proposals that limit or abolish the role of local government franchising and the ability of local governments to protect all its citizens, impose build-out requirements that will ensure that the non-discrimination provisions of the 1984 Cable Act are met and promote competition for all its citizens;

**BE IT RESOLVED**, the local franchising authority supports legislation which would promote competition in broadband and video services for everyone, recognizes and preserves local community needs, preserves local control over franchising, and prohibits redlining and other discriminatory practices;

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that in enacting new legislation, Congress and all states should ensure that the current anti-discrimination provisions in the 1984 Cable Act are preserved, and should ensure that any and all entrants abide by the same standards that current multichannel video providers live by.

  
Bunkey Morgan, Chairman

ATTEST:

  
Sandra B. Sublett, CMC, Clerk to the Board  
Chatham County Board of Commissioners