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From: Roswitha [rretzlaff@msn.com]
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2010 3:54 PM
To: cac@acton-ma.gov
Cc: BOS@acton-ma.gov
Subject: Communications and media carriers accessible in Acton

Dear Mr. Covert and other members of the Cable Advisory Committee,

I went to your web site to find out which

- * cable TV operators
- * Internet service providers
- * phone companies

are available in the Acton area. I will need to compare all my alternatives due to steeply rising monthly costs.

Where can I find a complete list, please?

By way of explanation:

Comcast has just effectively upped my 3-service 'bundle' charge by 34% in the last 2 months, from \$95 in May to \$117 in June, and now to \$135 in July - a \$40 total increase. They tell me, of course, it is because certain introductory offers have run out, and there is no reward given for decades of loyalty. When I mentioned to the representative that I have been with them for 26 years, his response was "Oh, we have many people in that category" which says to me that a good number are senior citizens by now and not very well able to afford the new technology, even though they are supposed to embrace it.

Personally, I have the choice of either switch to Verizon or other carrier(s), or else wait till Comcast happens to come up with some other 'new' offer. But they can't tell me anything in advance, so that I would know what to expect and could plan it into my budget. No, I would have to call in every day to see if they have something else newly available that would work for me. That is jerking people around, isn't it? Who sets or approves these rates anyway, I wonder? The electric or gas company has to apply well in advance for increases, and then announce them to their customers ahead of time. And the media/comm carriers can just decide willy-nilly how much to charge, whom, and for what? So, if one town is good at negotiating, its citizens make out well, whereas in another town that is not as astute, the citizens get a raw deal?

The current situation ought to change, and change drastically. So, here is my thought for the next best thing, if the rates really can't be set by law - state-wide and in an orderly fashion:

In addition to a new-customer incentive, there ought to be a retention incentive for long-term customers, e.g. a percentage discount offered for staying with them beyond a certain number of years. It could even be staggered so that the more years someone remains, the greater the discount, starting - let's say - at 3 years, or 5 years, even 10 years or more. They could reward people with a copper, silver, gold, platinum etc. kind of account attainable in certain increments of years.

How would that be for working into the next town-wide contract with the service companies?!

Sincerely,

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