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Date: April 3, 2007  
To: Members of the Senate and Assembly  
From: Bill Esbeck, WSTA Executive Director  
Subject: Video Competition Act of 2007

The Wisconsin legislature is currently considering the Video Competition Act of 2007. If this proposal becomes law, it will bring much-needed revisions to the state's franchising laws and will allow competition to extend further and faster than ever before. In the end, these changes will result in more consumer choice, which will inevitably lead to lower prices.

Opponents of this progress are grasping at straws and misleading the public about the quality of video services that local telephone companies can offer. While opponents want you to believe that these newer technologies are inferior to traditional cable services, a review of the facts shows that nothing could be further from the truth.

Local telephone companies across the state of Wisconsin have been providing video services using a technology called Internet Protocol Television (IPTV). IPTV allows a phone company to use a combination of fiber and copper lines (much of which is existing infrastructure) to deliver a digital video picture that is indistinguishable from other video services.

Customers in many Wisconsin communities are already enjoying the benefits of this technology, which provides channel lineups as vast and varying as any cable or satellite provider. Indeed, customers using IPTV don't have to compromise anything. The channel packages include premium services like video-on-demand and easy access to pay-per-view content.

The following companies are currently reaching dozens of communities with high-quality, reliable IPTV offerings. As you can see from the list below, this proven technology is allowing Wisconsin companies to offer competitive IPTV video service to complement their traditional voice product and high speed Internet broadband offerings. The Video Competition Act will help to ensure that the list of local telephone companies *already providing their customers an IPTV alternative continues to grow:*

- Amherst Telephone Company (Amherst, WI)
- Bayland Telephone, Inc. (Abrams, WI)
- Cochrane Cooperative Telephone Company (Cochrane, WI)
- Coon Valley Farmers Telephone Company, Inc. (Coon Valley, WI)
- Chibardun Telephone Cooperative, Inc. (Cameron, WI)
- Chequamegon Communications Cooperative, Inc. (Cable, WI)
- Hillsboro Telephone Company, Inc. (Hillsboro, WI)
- La Valle Telephone Cooperative (La Valle, WI)
- Lemonweir Valley Telephone Company (Camp Douglas, WI)

- Marquette-Adams Telephone Cooperative, Inc. (Oxford, WI)
- Richland-Grant Telephone Cooperative, Inc. (Blue River, WI)
- Union Telephone Company (Union, WI)
- Vernon Telephone Cooperative, Inc. (Westby, WI)
- CenturyTel (La Crosse, WI)
- Mount Horeb Telephone Company (Mt. Horeb, WI)
- Tri-County Communications Co-op, Inc. (Strum, WI)

In the end, any arguments portraying the technology or infrastructure as inferior are red herrings. Whether the quality of IPTV is good enough is a question that Wisconsin's consumers should answer for themselves, not self-interested opponents of progress. This is precisely the aim of the Video Competition Act of 2007- to put the remote in the hands of the consumer and give them a choice of what to watch.