

Molly Wingrove

From: Tom Norton <tommichiganmedia@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 9, 2023 1:58 PM
To: Molly Wingrove
Subject: HB 4965

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To: Rep. Tyrone Carter
Michigan House of Representatives
House Regulatory Reform Committee

Dear Representative Carter,

My name is Tom Norton from WKTU Community Media in Wyoming and Kentwood Michigan and I am writing to you in opposition to House Bill 4965.

Representative, it is simply not fair to allow video streamers such as Netflix and Prime, et al to use the public right of way (by sending their signals down the streets) These streets are solely paid for by the taxpayer in each community and we can't allow Netflix, et al to use public streets as their primary means of corporate revenue without providing compensation to the taxpayer.

There are 1400 communities in Michigan that collect some form of franchise fee from the main video service providers (Comcast, AT&T, et al) It is time for the other video services (Netflix, Amazon Prime, et al) that are exactly like Comcast and AT&T, et al to start compensating the taxpayer for use of the public roads. (To exclude them from paying with HB 4965 prevents the taxpayer from ever being compensated by blocking these future franchise fees from ever being collected by the cities.)

Please, Representative the use of public property by private corporations without compensation (as is the exclusion nature of this bill) is simply wrong for Michigan taxpayers who build the roads that the video streamers use to create all of their corporate income.

These franchise fees currently paid by Comcast and AT&T for the use of public roads often fund police and fire in many Michigan cities in addition to maintaining the roads.

As cable franchise revenue rapidly dwindles for every city, HB4965 will now exclude all other video services from ever compensating taxpayers and will take away millions of dollars in funding from cities across Michigan. This is the very funding that goes toward police and fire services in addition to PEG/community media stations and a host of other uses the cities need it for.

Sincerely,

Tom Norton