

Reply to comments of SureWest Communications

In the comments of SureWest this company gives its opposition to Mandatory Bulk Billing Contracts and also "urges the Commission to apply its previously enacted prohibition on exclusive service contracts in MDUs to non-cable MVPDs." As a consumer stuck with a long term contract I second the SureWest beliefs.

I live in Live Oak Preserve (LOP) in Tampa, FL and unfortunately have a 15 year exclusive contract for cable TV, Internet and home security monitoring services by Century Communications. This Mandatory Bulk Billing Contract was established by the original developer who just happens to also be majority owners of Century. NO RESIDENTS had any input into this agreement which is enforced by the developer controlled HOA.

In their comments "SureWest believes in a fairly competitive market where customers can freely choose among all providers of multi-channel video (MV) services, the quality of its products and services will allow it to succeed and customers will benefit from such competition." Well, the quality of Century's products would not allow it to compete in a fair market; hence the need for a very cozy long term exclusive contract.

SureWest does not object to bulk billing agreements between MVPDs and MDUs "as long as the residents are not required to pay for service if they do not wish to take service from that particular MVPD and can elect to take service from another MVPD (or to take service from no MVPD)." If only Century had the confidence in its products and service to operate in this manner.

SureWest also states "by creating a significant barrier to MDU residents subscribers to the MVPD of their choice, Mandatory Bulk Billing Contracts undercut the rationale for competing MVPDs to invest in wiring and connecting an MDU to the network". Here in LOP, Verizon has recently wired the development with fiber only to find their only available customers are the very rich or those residents who work at home via computer and MUST have a better, more reliable Internet service. DirectTV and Dish network also find the

HOA rarely approves a waiver allowing residents to access those providers.

SureWest summarizes that "the use of Mandatory Bulk Billing Contracts is an unfair method of competition which impedes consumer choice of their preferred MVPD service provider, has the effect of being a barrier to entry for competitors and thus impairs the deployment of advanced services." A very well said analysis of the situation LOP residents face with our mandatory and universally unwanted provider, Century Communications.