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As a tech-savvy, concerned citizen, I watched with incredulity over the years as Time Warner Cable and AT&T worked the N.C. General Assembly in an effort to stymie real broadband competition in North Carolina. Telecom lobbyists sent bills to state representatives without the representatives ever reading the bills. My jaw dropped in a committee meeting as a state senator questioned whether wireless Internet would make fiber Internet obsolete.

The level of falsehoods and fear mongering spread by the telecoms was staggering. Eventually their lobbyists found willing co-conspirators in state representatives and rammed their anti-municipal-broadband bill through the legislature with little or no public comment. North Carolinians got railroaded.

There is no question in my mind that Time Warner Cable, AT&T, CenturyLink greatly fear municipal broadband. There is also no question in my mind that broadband is as vital in today's economy as roads or electricity. Time Warner Cable's massive, nationwide Internet outage drove that point home, causing untold financial losses to the economy.

Cities have over a century of experience selling services to their citizens. This is nothing new. Most sell water. Some also sell electricity. The City of Wilson sells water, electricity, phone, and Internet and from what I hear folks are happy with this service. The only risk is the one posed by Big Telecom moving the legislative goal posts whenever it pours money into the political process.

It's time the FCC steps in and levels the broadband playing field. Please grant other North Carolina municipalities the right to decide for themselves whether to provide their citizens a true 21st century broadband infrastructure, without meddling from the for-profit telecoms. North Carolina needs your help.

Regards,  
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