



Testimony in Support of HB 1608, "The Telecommunications Market Competition Legislation"

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November 12, 2013

Every Pennsylvania business in one form or another depends on communications technologies. For this reason, the PennSuburban Chamber of Commerce strongly endorses HB 1608, because we believe this bill will help ensure the state remains open to new investments in communications products and services.

Fifty years ago, members of our Chamber depended on traditional copper networks to communicate with their customers. But old copper technologies have been replaced by innovative wireless and broadband networks that deliver the speeds and mobility today's companies need to compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

It is surprising that the state has taken such a long time to update its telecommunications regulations given the changes that have taken place in the market.

Businesses and people of all ages and backgrounds have embraced new communications technologies in one form or another. Consider the legislator who is checking his email on his smartphones or communicating to his constituents via Facebook; the grandmother in Lansdale who is Skyping with her grandchild in California; or the local university providing online learning to students statewide thanks to high speed broadband networks.

With all this change and so much potential still to come, it is simply unfair to treat traditional phone companies like they are the only ones providing communications services. Doing so impairs these companies from investing in new networks that today's consumers and businesses demand.

Despite the slow economy, telecommunications companies in Pennsylvania have remained vibrant – contributing to job growth and investing in new infrastructure for our digital economy. To ensure these providers continue their important investments, antiquated laws and regulations governing the telecommunications industry must be modernized. After all, public policies should drive innovation, investment and economic growth. HB 1608 achieves that goal.

HB 1608 will ensure our state has the best communications infrastructure available and does so while keeping important consumer protections in place. That's good news for our members and for people throughout the Commonwealth.

Our Chamber is counting on the Consumer Affairs Committee to move this legislation forward. A 20<sup>th</sup> century regulatory framework no longer has a place in today's modern world. Thank you for considering our views.

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