



Legislation Text

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File #: Res 31569, Version: 2

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**CITY OF SEATTLE**  
**RESOLUTION \_\_\_\_\_**

A RESOLUTION proposing that certain public-interest obligations be required of Comcast Corporation for its proposed merger with Time Warner Cable Incorporated in the event the merger is approved by the Federal Communications Commission.

WHEREAS, in 2010 Comcast Corporation purchased NBC Universal for \$30 billion and in 2014 it announced plans to purchase Time Warner Cable for \$45 billion; and

WHEREAS, Comcast Corporation leads the U.S. with nearly 22 million cable subscribers and over 20 million broadband subscribers while Time Warner Cable is the second-largest U.S. cable company, with roughly 11 million cable and broadband subscribers, together representing roughly half of all paying cable-TV-phone customers in the U. S.; and

WHEREAS, since the announcement of the proposed Comcast Corporation-Time Warner Cable merger, Comcast Corporation has made permanent its 3-year pilot program, Internet Essentials, which provides discount Internet service, low cost computer purchases, and digital literacy training to certain low income families; and

WHEREAS, United States antitrust laws regulate the conduct and organization of business corporations to promote fair competition for the benefit of consumers in part by restricting mergers and acquisitions that can substantially lessen competition and abuse monopoly power; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Communication Commission has recorded a number of sanctions against Comcast Corporation regarding fair competition among cable and Internet service providers, technological innovation, consumer service, and adherence to national and local operating agreements;

WHEREAS, the proposed merger of Comcast Corporation and Time Warner Cable is currently under review for approval by the Federal Communication Commission;

NOW, THEREFORE,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE MAYOR  
CONCURRING, THAT:**

Section 1. The City of Seattle concludes that a proposed merger of the two largest U.S. cable and Internet providers holds the potential to harm consumers and businesses if not thoroughly vetted.

Section 2. The City of Seattle will communicate its position to the FCC and to the U.S. Justice Department that careful examination of past performance by Comcast Corporation - when combined with the negative impacts joining the two largest U.S. cable companies may have on pricing, competition, and technological innovation - should lead to close scrutiny of this proposed merger.

Section 3. The City of Seattle will communicate its position to the FCC and to the U.S. Justice Department that, in the event of their approval of the Comcast Corporation-Time Warner Cable merger, the following public-interest obligations should apply:

- a) Preserve and advance Public, Educational, and Government access cable channels and programming (PEG);
- b) Do not oppose municipal broadband efforts and oppose state initiatives that would impose prohibitions or restrictions on public and public/private broadband projects;
- c) Significantly expand Comcast Corporation's low-cost Internet Essentials program in order to:
  - i. increase the number of eligible students;
  - ii. include disadvantaged groups such as seniors and persons living in subsidized housing; and
  - iii. provide higher internet speeds for discounted programs.
- d) Continue abiding by the FCC's Open Internet Rules and do not discriminate in bit transport nor block access to lawful content;
- e) Improve customer service by employing verifiable, time-based measurements and by subscribing to such measurements that may be administered by service area jurisdictions;
- f) Do not impose data caps on Internet customers;
- g) Do not use the competitive advantage brought about by this consolidation to increase prices for cable and internet services.

Adopted by the City Council the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

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President \_\_\_\_\_ of the City Council

THE MAYOR CONCURRING:

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Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Filed by me this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

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Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)