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Chairman Lawrence, Chairman Berry and Members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee,

My name is Barry Hobbins and I am the Public Advocate with the Office of the Public Advocate and I am here today to testify neither for nor against LD 920 “An Act To Promote Oversight of and Competitive Parity among Video Service Providers.”

The Office of the Public Advocate was asked to coordinate a study group during the 129<sup>th</sup> Legislature tasked with addressing many of the issues addressed in this bill. We would be happy to distribute the study for the work session and the link can be found here: <https://www.maine.gov/meopa/reports-and-testimony#cable>. In a brief summary, what the Office found was that there was a vast array of interests around this subject and while this bill may be a step in the right direction, there is still a considerable amount of work to be done.

Perhaps the biggest problem with the bill is the undo financial burden it will place on municipalities. Loss of local control is always a hard policy stance to support and it is no different here.

An additional concern the OPA has is the bill is not in accordance with Federal Cable Act. These two issues must be addressed in an amendment during the work session for the Office of the Public Advocate to lend its support to this proposed legislation.

Thank you for your time, attention and consideration of this testimony. The Office of the Public Advocate looks forward to working with the Committee on LD 920, and will be present at the work session to assist the Committee in its consideration of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,



Barry J. Hobbins  
Public Advocate