

## Local governments offer the 'Truth' on telecom reform

*by Bend\_Weekly\_News\_Sources*

Facing fierce lobbying efforts and multi-million dollar misinformation campaigns by the telecom industry, national local government associations today launched a new website to present the "real truth" on the potential effects of telecommunications reform on communities and consumers.

The new site, <http://www.thetruthontelecomreform.org/>, provides factual information to lawmakers, policymakers, and the public about legislative and regulatory efforts affecting local taxing authority, cable franchising, public safety communications, and other issues. The site includes fact sheets, information on Congressional actions and rulings by the Federal Communications Commission, tools to help visitors voice their support for fair telecom reform, local news stories, news releases and other materials.

The site is sponsored by the Telecommunications Advocacy Coalition (TAC), a non-partisan coalition of national local government associations representing virtually all elected and appointed local officials in the U.S. The coalition includes the National League of Cities (NLC), the National Association of Counties (NACo), the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), and the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA).

The coalition's goals are to ensure access to the latest telecommunications technology for a fair price for ALL of their constituents. Local governments ensure that public safety communications are up and running, that local access channels receive adequate funding, and that communications providers pay fair compensation for the use of public streets and sidewalks. Last year TAC successfully thwarted legislative measures pushed by the telecom industry that would have stripped franchising authority from cities and counties and that could have forced local governments to raise taxes, cut services, or both. Although these proposals were not enacted, the telecom industry is expected to continue to utilize new and more aggressive lobbying and marketing tactics to further its agenda.

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