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Details:

(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2009-10

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on ... Commerce, Utilities, Energy, & Rail (SC-CUER)

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
(**ab** = Assembly Bill) (**ar** = Assembly Resolution) (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
(**sb** = Senate Bill) (**sr** = Senate Resolution) (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**



University of Wisconsin-Stout
P.O. Box 790
Menomonie, WI 54751-0790

February 18, 2020

Senator Jeffrey Plale, Chair
Senate Utilities Committee
Room 313 South, State Capitol
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882

Dear Senator Plale:

On behalf of the Discovery Center at the University of Wisconsin-Stout in Menomonie, WI, I urge you to support Senate Bill 469/Assembly Bill 696: the "Wisconsin Access Reform and Parity Act."

UW-Stout's Discovery Center serves to advance UW-Stout's polytechnic focus through applied research with a commitment to quality and innovation, transformative education, and interdisciplinary collaboration. The Center integrates UW-Stout's applied research strengths, its faculty, staff and students, and its relationships with community and industry leaders to create collaborative partnerships. The Center provides leadership for innovation-based and knowledge-driven solutions for businesses, student learning, and economic development.

We support legislation that focuses on reducing unnecessary regulations, thereby removing obstacles for companies that create jobs, and on boosting our economy. Wisconsin's landline telephone providers are forced to operate under inconsistent and outdated rules from precompetition days in the telecommunications market. By supporting SB 469/AB 696 and similar legislation, you can help create an opportunity to increase service options and to eliminate restrictive, technologically obsolete regulations.

Wisconsin can lead the way to economic recovery for our nation if we can attract new business and help current businesses survive and thrive. We believe that the passage of SB 469/AB 696 is a positive step toward that goal.

Thank you for granting a public hearing for SB 469/AB 696 and for your attention to this need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Randy Hulke".

Randy Hulke, Executive Director
The Discovery Center

RH/cjo







New North, Inc.
1716 Lawrence Dr.
De Pere, WI 54115

February 18, 2010

Re: Matters related to SB 469

Dear Elected Official,

In today's global economy, technology, telecommunications services and high-speed internet access are essential elements for a thriving business environment. We support a regulatory climate in the state which allows the opportunity for greater infrastructure investments, job creation, and a more competitive marketplace for consumers.

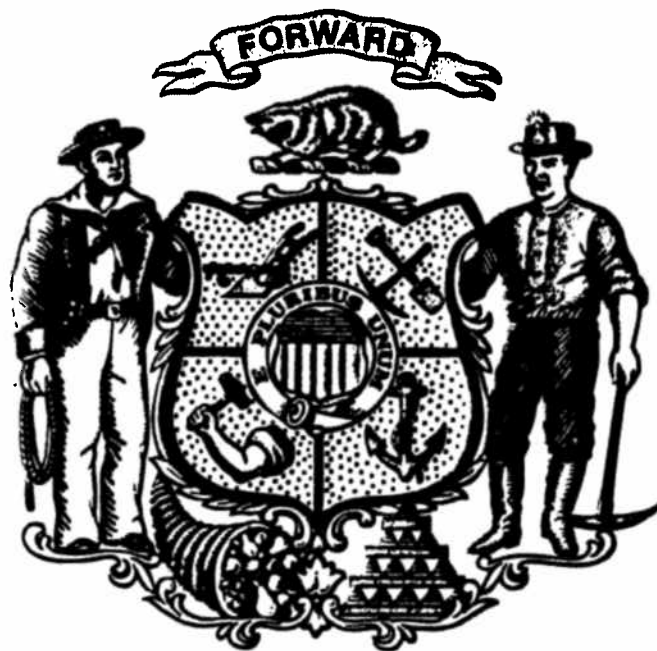
Our orientation to a regional economic strategy includes efforts to develop industry clusters that are uniquely and favorably impacted by market competition for communications capacities/services. Current regulatory changes under review may well provide motivation for additional investment in technology and infrastructure in the region that will certainly help with the retention and creation of high-tech employment opportunities in Wisconsin.

New North encourages your review of infrastructure access and service matters that are important to supporting our strategic economic development efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Murphy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "M".

Jerry Murphy
Executive Director, New North, Inc.



February 18, 2010

Senator Jeffrey Plale
Room 313 South
State Capitol
P.O. Box 7882
Madison WI 53707-7882

Dear Senator Plale:

I am writing this letter in support of the SB 469/AB 696 which would bring outdated laws current with today's consumer preferences and new technologies. This legislation provides a level playing field which encourages competition and allows traditional landline providers to be regulated the same way as newer phone companies.

Technology is a major component to all of the educational opportunities and innovative careers offered at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College. In order for Northeast Wisconsin and the State to rebound and compete in today's economy, this legislation is necessary and important for business and industry to stay competitive in a global marketplace.

We strongly encourage you to support this legislation which will boost consumer choice, create jobs, and encourage companies to invest in Wisconsin.

Thank you for your consideration in supporting SB 469/AB 696 legislation.

Sincerely,



Sandra M. Duckett
Vice President of College Advancement





Waukesha County Chamber of Commerce

DRAFT

February 19, 2010

Senator Jeff Plale, Chairman
Senator Bob Wirch
Senator Pat Kreitlow
Senator Sheila Harsdorf
Senator Jon Erpenbach
Senator Robert Cowles
Senator Neil Kedzie

Rep. James Soletski, Chairman
Rep. Josh Zepnick
Rep. Mark Honadel
Rep. Michael Huebsch
Rep. Phil Montgomery
Rep. Joe Parisi
Rep. Kevin Petersen
Rep. Jon Richards
Rep. Anthony Staskunas
Rep. John Steinbrink
Rep. Ted Zigmunt
Rep. Rich Zipperer

RE: SB-469/AB-696

Dear Senate and Assembly Utility Committee Members,

The Waukesha County Chamber of Commerce is a leading resource and advocate for businesses in Southeastern Wisconsin. Founded in 1918, the Waukesha County Chamber represents almost 900 member organizations and is devoted to improving and protecting the business climate in Waukesha County and the State of Wisconsin.

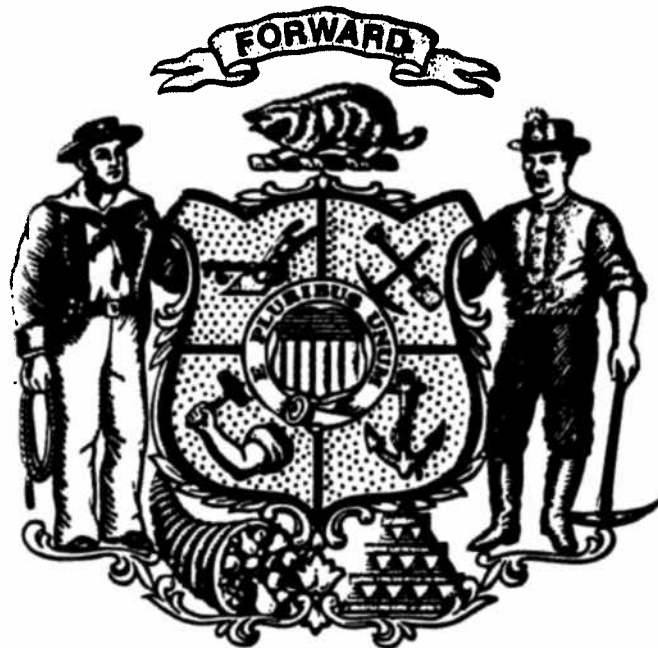
Now, more than ever, Wisconsin businesses need to be able to compete effectively across the globe. Telecommunications technologies are a key to making that happen.

Outdated rules that apply to some Wisconsin telecom companies stifle investment and innovation in our state's vital communications infrastructure. Senate Bill 469 and its companion, Assembly Bill 696, address this disparity and create a level playing field for all landline telecom service providers in Wisconsin. We encourage your support of these bills.

Telecom providers create local jobs and offer competitive services to many members of this Chamber and our community. Please support Wisconsin business owners, their employees, and the families that depend on them by voting in favor of this legislation.

Sincerely


Suzanne Kelley, President



Lynch, Abigail

From: Prunty, Pat L. [Pat.Prunty@NWTC.EDU] on behalf of Duckett, Sandra M. [Sandra.Duckett@NWTC.EDU]
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2010 2:25 PM
To: Sen.Cowles; Sen.Kedzie; senkreitlow@legis.wisconsin.gov; Sen.Harsdorf; Sen.Plale; sen.erpenbach@legis.wisconsin.gov; Sen.Wirch
Subject: [Possible SPAM] Senate Utility Committee Members:
Importance: Low

Dear Senators of the Utility Committee:

I am writing this letter in support of the SB 469/AB 696 which would bring outdated laws current with today's consumer preferences and new technologies. This legislation provides a level playing field which encourages competition and allows traditional landline providers to be regulated the same way as newer phone companies.

Technology is a major component to all of the educational opportunities and innovative careers offered at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College. In order for Northeast Wisconsin and the State to rebound and compete in today's economy, this legislation is necessary and important for business and industry to stay competitive in a global marketplace.

We strongly encourage you to support this legislation which will boost consumer choice, create jobs, and encourage companies to invest in Wisconsin.

Thank you for your consideration in supporting SB 469/AB 696 legislation.

Sincerely,

Sandra M. Duckett
Vice President of College Advancement

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College | 2740 West Mason Street | Green Bay, WI | 54307-9042
920.498.6970 | Fax 920.498-6260 | sandra.duckett@nwtc.edu

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February 23, 2010

The Honorable Jeffrey Plale
Wisconsin State Senator
Room 313 South
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Senator Plale,

I am writing to express the Wisconsin Business Council's support for SB-469 and AB-696. The WBC is Wisconsin's only non-partisan business group. One of the four principles that form the foundation of WBC's advocacy is regulation – more specifically the appropriate level of regulation. SB-469 and AB-696 strike the appropriate balance of regulation for the telecommunications industry given the rapid change in such a competitive marketplace.

These important bills would modernize the way Wisconsin regulates traditional telephone companies. The bill would regulate them under existing rules used effectively for many years for newer telephone providers, such as cable companies and others. The legislation would retain the Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection's strong powers over the industry. As a result of this common sense approach, we believe Wisconsin's overall regulatory climate will not only be improved, but we will see more infrastructure investments, job retention and creation and competition than would otherwise take place.

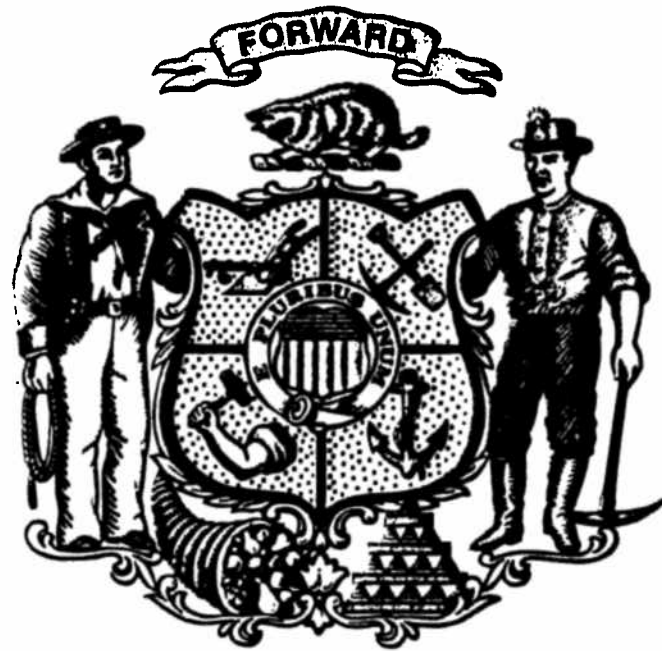
There is no doubt that technology has how we do almost everything today, but especially the way we communicate with each other. The use of traditional landline phone service is declining rapidly as wireless and other alternative technologies become more readily available. To accommodate this changed marketplace, we must update our laws and regulations to ensure fair and robust competition. At the same time, it is important to retain necessary consumer protection. We believe that SB-469 and AB-696 strike such a reasonable balance between protecting consumers and encouraging competition and investment.

Perhaps the most important reason to modernize Wisconsin's telephone regulations is to free up resources for further investment in broadband technology. This is critical to job creation and Wisconsin's economic competitiveness. Wisconsin employers use broadband as part of their business model for numerous purposes. It has become a way of life for our businesses and an important component of Wisconsin's economic infrastructure, with thousands of jobs supported or created annually because of broadband investment.

For these reasons, we strongly urge your support for SB-469 and AB-696.

Sincerely,

Brian Taffora
VP of Government Relations & Operations
Wisconsin Business Council





Barron Chippewa Clark Dunn Eau Claire
Pepin Pierce Polk Rusk St. Croix

February 27, 2010

Representative James Soletski
Room 307 West State Capitol
PO Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708

RE: Support for SB 469/AB 696

Dear Representative Soletski:

Let me introduce myself. I am Bill Ihlenfeldt, Executive Director of Momentum West. Momentum West is a regional economic development marketing organization representing 10 counties in West Central Wisconsin including Barron, Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Rusk, and St. Croix. We are one of seven such organizations in Wisconsin.

Telecommunications is vitally important to the economic future of our region and our state, and anything that can be done to cause investment in that industry is considered to be a crucial economic development asset. Telecommunications is especially critical in our region where entrepreneurial development makes up a major portion of our economy, and thus it becomes the lifeline for these small industries.

We feel that competition and a level playing field will allow advancements to happen and certainly SB 469/AB 696 will bring outdated laws up-to-date with today's new and emerging technologies. One set of rules for all providers will encourage more investment in research and development that can only help the consumer and encourage advancement in the industry.

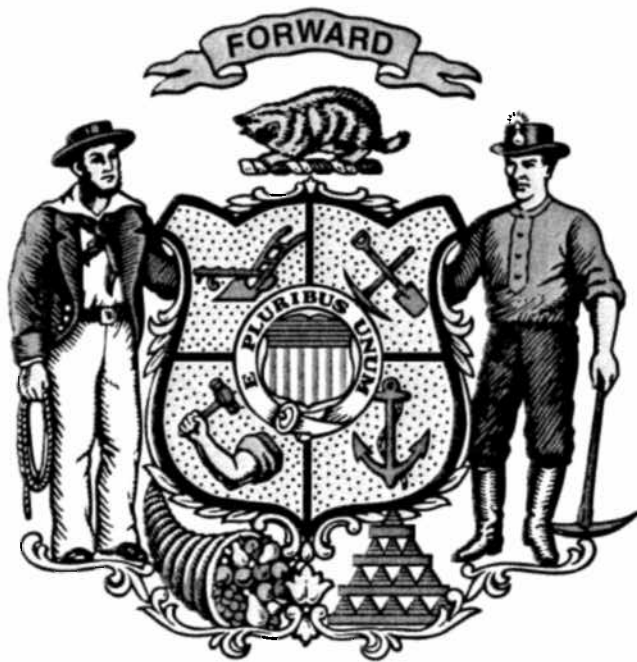
While we encourage competition and advancement, it is also critical to keep in place and monitor expectations of all companies through identified metrics and deliverables.

Finally, we feel that advancements in this industry are just as critical as advancements in transportation and other economic development assets that our state has to offer.

We sincerely encourage you to support and pass SB 469/AB 696. If we can be of further assistance to you please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Bill Ihlenfeldt



CHIPPEWA FALLS

AREA CHAMBER of COMMERCE

March 8, 2010

SB 469?

Senator Jeff Plale, Chairman
Senator Robert Wirch
Senator Pat Kreitlow
Senator Sheila Harsdorf
Senator Jon Erpenbach
Senator Robert Cowles
Senator Neal Kedzie

Senate Utilities Committee:

The Chippewa Falls Area Chamber of Commerce leads in advocating for business in the area.

It is always good to have a "level playing field" for all businesses within the state of Wisconsin.

The regulations of the past encouraged competition while moving towards a level playing field. There appears to be a discrepancy within the telecommunications area. Jane Doe cannot get a high speed internet service from her provider, but her neighbor can because she is served by a different company. This is due in part to the field not being equal for all companies.

I understand you will be considering a bill that will place all regulated landline carriers under the same set of regulatory rules. I believe this will be a benefit of your constituents and the businesses you serve.

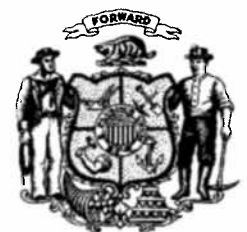
Sincerely yours,



Michael Jordan
President



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



WISCONSIN STATE GRANGE



March 11, 2010

Dear Senator,

The Wisconsin State Grange, founded in 1872, is Wisconsin's oldest general farm and rural public interest organization. The Wisconsin State Grange represents farmers and rural residents across this state. Nationally, the Grange has been a non-partisan proponent of progressive legislation that will benefit U.S. agriculture and rural America for more than 140 years. One of the Wisconsin State Grange's top concerns is improving telecommunications services in rural Wisconsin. That is why the Wisconsin State Grange strongly urges you to support Senate Bill 469 and Assembly Bill 696.

The Wisconsin State Grange supports SB-469 / AB-696 because we believe this measure will encourage additional investment in broadband and other advanced telecommunications services in rural Wisconsin. Wisconsin Grange members are concerned that failure to modernize our laws will hinder additional, vital telecommunications investment in rural parts of our state. The bill would bring regulations governing many rural telecommunications providers into line with the levels of regulation their competitors face. At the same time, the bill retains the many important telecom consumer protections in place at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection. The Grange would much rather see rural telecommunications providers in Wisconsin invest in additional infrastructure and equipment, rather than spend their resources on complying with outdated regulations.

Access to advanced telecommunications infrastructure and services will be critical if farming and rural towns across Wisconsin are to remain economically competitive with our urban and suburban communities. Again, please support Senate Bill 469 and Assembly Bill 696. Thank you for your time and for your consideration of the views of the Wisconsin State Grange.

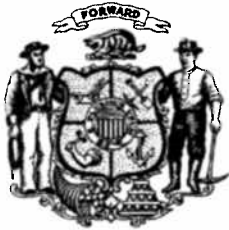
Sincerely,

Richard L. Keller

Richard Keller, Legislative Director
Wisconsin State Grange
1454 Keller Road
Mount Horeb, WI 53065



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



March 12, 2010

Senator Jeffrey Plale
Room 313 South
State Capitol
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882

Re: *Section 58 of S.B. 469/A.B. 696*

Dear Senator Jeffrey Plale:

Vonage Holdings Corp. (“Vonage”), a leading provider of Voice over Internet Protocol (“VoIP”) services, writes to express its support for S.B. 469/A.B. 696’s (the “Bill”) exemption of interconnected VoIP providers from regulation by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission. Vonage respectfully urges you to build on this forward-looking policy by deleting the provisions of the Bill that would attempt to impose state universal service obligations and intrastate access charges on interconnected VoIP providers. These provisions are inconsistent with federal law and run counter to the pro-innovation, pro-competition policy embodied in the remainder of proposed Section 196.206.

Wisconsin consumers, like consumers throughout our nation, have benefitted tremendously from the innovation and competition fostered by Vonage and other VoIP providers. Most recently, Vonage expanded calling under its most popular plan to include calls to more than 60 countries around the world without raising its low, \$24.99 per month price. Economists estimate developments like these will enable VoIP services to generate approximately \$24 billion in direct consumer savings for the five year period of 2008 through 2012.¹ These direct consumer benefits from VoIP services are dwarfed by the indirect consumer benefits generated by the competitive response of other service providers, which is estimated at approximately \$87 billion over the same five-year period.² Further, the VoIP industry continues to be a bright spot in a weak economy. The VoIP industry was the fastest growing industry from 2000 to 2009 and is expected to be the fastest growing industry from 2010 to 2019.³ The VoIP

¹ See Michael D. Pelcovits & Daniel E. Haar, Microeconomic Consulting & Research Associates, Inc., *Consumer Benefits from Cable-Telco Competition*, at 27 (updated Nov. 2007), available at http://www.micradc.com/news/publications/pdfs/Updated_MiCRA_Report_FINAL.pdf.

² *Id.*

³ See, e.g. IBISWorld Press Release, IBISWorld Identifies Best and Worst Performing Sectors by Revenue Growth, Dec. 22, 2009, <http://www.ibisworld.com/pressrelease/pressrelease.aspx?prid=210>. For 2000-2009, VoIP ranked first in revenue growth for all industries at “an astronomical 179035.8%.” IBISWorld estimates that VoIP will also be the top revenue growth industry for 2010-2019 at 149.6%.

industry is also one of the top industries for job and income growth.⁴ By ensuring that interconnected VoIP is not subject to unnecessary regulation, the Bill will enable interconnected VoIP providers to continue to deliver competition and innovation to consumers in Wisconsin and throughout the nation.

Vonage is concerned, however, that proposed Section 196.206(2) would attempt to impose state USF charges on providers like Vonage. Wisconsin should not take this step unless and until the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") changes existing law to permit states to impose such assessments.

In 2004, the FCC preempted "traditional [state] 'telephone company' regulations" of Vonage's service.⁵ Among the traditional "telephone company" regulations preempted by the FCC was Minnesota Statute § 237.16 subd. 9, which requires Minnesota to establish and require contributions to the state universal service fund.⁶ Every federal court to consider the scope of the *Vonage Preemption Order* has confirmed that the *Order* preempts traditional state telephone company regulation of Vonage's service, including states' ability to impose and collect universal service fees on that service.⁷

The FCC is now considering a request by two states for authority to impose state universal service assessments on providers like Vonage.⁸ In that proceeding, Vonage has

surpassing Retirement & Pension Plans, Biotechnology, and eCommerce & Online Auctions, among others.

⁴ See Triangle Business Journal, Report: VoIP the Place to be for Jobs, Money (Apr. 2, 2008), available at <http://www.bizjournals.com/triangle/stories/2008/03/31/daily21.html>. A leading business research firm lists VoIP services at the top of the industries it designates as "hot jobs," estimating that VoIP services will see average annualized job growth of over 19% and average annualized wage growth of over 21% through 2012.

⁵ *Vonage Holdings Corporation Petition for Declaratory Ruling Concerning an Order of the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission*, 19 FCC Rcd. 22404 (2004) ("*Vonage Preemption Order*"), *aff'd sub nom. Minnesota Pub. Utils. Comm'n v. FCC*, 483 F.3d 570 (8th Cir. 2007).

⁶ *Id.* at 22408-22409 ¶ 10 & n. 28.

⁷ See *Vonage Holdings Corp. v. Neb. Pub. Serv. Comm'n*, 564 F.3d 900 (8th Cir. 2009), *aff'g* 543 F. Supp. 2d 1062 (D. Neb. 2008); *N.M. Pub. Regulation Comm'n v. Vonage Holdings Corp.*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 640 F. Supp. 2d 1359 (D.N.M. July 28, 2009); *Vonage Holdings Corp. v. N.Y. State Pub. Serv. Comm'n*, No. 04 Civ. 4306 (DFE), 2005 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 33121 (S.D.N.Y. Dec. 14, 2005); *Vonage Holdings Corp. v. Minn. Pub. Utils. Comm'n*, 394 F.3d 568 (8th Cir. 2004), *aff'g* 290 F. Supp. 2d 993 (D. Minn. 2003).

⁸ *Nebraska Public Service Commission and Kansas Corporation Commission Petition for Declaratory Ruling or, in the Alternative, Adoption of Rule Declaring that State Universal Service Funds May Assess Nomadic VoIP Intrastate Revenues*, WC Docket 06-122 (filed July 16, 2009).

Senator Jeffrey Plale
March 12, 2010
Page 3

explained that it supports the goals of state universal service programs and will contribute to those programs if and when the FCC establishes rules that would permit states to impose such charges in a manner consistent with federal policy.⁹ Vonage has also asked the FCC to address existing and potential conflicts among state USF assessment methods by setting forth the conditions under which state universal service programs will not conflict with federal policy and will not be preempted.¹⁰ Because current law does not permit state universal service assessments on providers like Vonage, and because the Commission is likely to provide states with critical guidance with respect to their authority when it resolves the Petition, it would be premature for Wisconsin to adopt Section 196.206(2) now.

Finally, Vonage notes that Section 196.206(3) is unnecessary and should also be removed from S.B. 469/A.B. 696. Section 196.206(3) permits the imposition of intrastate access charges on interconnected VoIP service “[u]nless otherwise provided under federal law.” Under federal law, however, interconnected VoIP calls are not subject to the access charge regime.¹¹

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 730-1346.

Sincerely yours,



Brita D. Strandberg
Counsel to Vonage Holdings Corporation

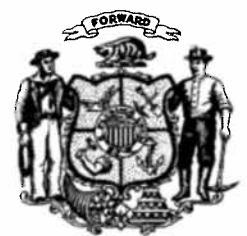
⁹ Comments of Vonage Holdings Corp. at 1, WC Docket 06-122 (filed Sept. 9, 2009).

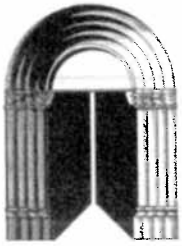
¹⁰ *Id.* at 3-6.

¹¹ *See Paetec v. CommPartners*, CA No. 08-0397 (JR), Memorandum Order at 11 (D.D.C. filed Feb. 18, 2010).



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





WISCONSIN
WOMEN'S
BUSINESS
INITIATIVE
CORPORATION

**MILWAUKEE
OFFICE**

2745 N. Dr. Martin
Luther King Jr. Drive
Milwaukee, WI 53212
Phone: 414-263-5450
Fax: 414-263-5456

**SOUTH CENTRAL
OFFICE**

2300 S. Park Street
Madison, WI 53713
Phone: 608-257-5450
Fax: 608-257-5454

SOUTHEAST OFFICE

600 52nd Street, Suite 130
Kenosha, WI 53140
Phone: 262-654-1234 ext.114
Fax: 262-654-4655

Email: info@wwbic.com
www.wwbic.com
www.onlinewbic.gov



Providing more than
20 years of Opportunity,
Entrepreneurship and Success.

March 15, 2010

Senator Jeff Plale
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, Wisconsin 53707-5487

Dear State Senator Plale;

Women business owners in Wisconsin benefit from more choices in telecommunication services and access to the latest, state-of-the-art technologies. That is why members of the Women Impacting Public Policy's Wisconsin Chapter support modernization of telecom laws in the state through SB-469 / AB-696.

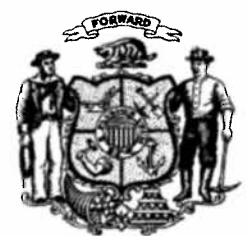
This legislation helps open the door to more technology investment by removing impediments put in place by outdated laws designed for an era when there was no competition. By treating all providers with the same, lighter touch of regulation, SB-469 / AB-696 will clear the way for more investments in broadband, more price competition and other new services as they become available.

The Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation (WWBIC) is a statewide economic development corporation providing quality business education, financial awareness programs, technical assistance and access to capital to Wisconsin entrepreneurs and businesses.

As Wisconsin business owners and employers, we need our state to be a leader in attracting technology investments. Up-to-date infrastructure is a key to our success, whether we're working with clients and customers in rural Wisconsin or around the world. On behalf of Wisconsin women business owners, please support SB-469 / AB-696.

Sincerely yours,

Wendy K. Baumann
President/CVO





Metropolitan Milwaukee
Association of Commerce

**Top State Tech, Economic Development and Non-Profit groups say
Modernization of Wisconsin Telecom Laws Urgently Needed,
31 groups support SB-469/AB-696, saying new law could stimulate job
growth, tech economy**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 15, 2010

CONTACT: STEVE BAAS

414-287-4138

Madison – Thirty-one top economic development, business and non-profit groups from across Wisconsin called Monday for passage of Senate Bill 469 / Assembly Bill 696, saying the telecommunications legislation could help preserve and create jobs and improve technology infrastructure across the state.

The supporters include economic development associations, local and regional business groups and non-profits representing diverse groups of state residents.

SB-469 / AB-696 would modernize existing telecom regulations by placing all landline providers under a single set of rules – rules that have been successfully regulating part of the industry for years. The state's tough consumer protection laws would continue to apply to all providers, under the bill.

"The time is now to remove barriers that make it harder for Wisconsin to have a chance to compete in the 21st century marketplace," said Tom Still, president of the non-profit Wisconsin Technology Council. "Out-of-date telecommunications rules slow investment in Wisconsin's broadband and telecommunication infrastructure, reducing jobs in these important sectors."

Steve Baas, government affairs director for the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, said that outdated public policies could hamper emerging technologies, reduce consumer choices and eliminate Wisconsin jobs.

"Creating and retaining jobs becomes much more difficult when outdated government rules continue to drain resources from potential investments," Baas said.

Representatives of the 31 organizations spoke in favor of the bill at a news conference at the State Capitol on Monday. In support of the legislation are:

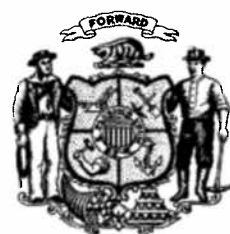
- Avenues West Association
- Chippewa Falls Area Chamber of Commerce
- Discovery Center - UW Stout
- Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce

- Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- Friends of Housing Corporation
- Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce
- Hispanic Business and Professionals Association
- Hmong/American Friendship Association
- Independent Business Association of Wisconsin
- Kenosha Area Chamber of Commerce
- Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce Chamber
- Milwaukee Community Service Corps
- Milwaukee Urban League
- Momentum West
- Mueller Communications, Inc.
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People - Milwaukee Branch
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People - Racine County
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People - Waukesha Co. Branch
- New North, Inc.
- Northeast Wisconsin Technical College
- Paradigm Sensors
- Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce (RAMAC)
- United Community Center
- Urban Economic Development Association of Wisconsin
- Valley Home Builders Association
- Waukesha County Chamber of Commerce
- Wired Wisconsin
- Wisconsin Business Council
- Wisconsin Supplier Diversity Council
- Wisconsin Technology Council

###



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Lynch, Abigail

From: Angelin Barrios [abarrios@wipp.org]
Sent: Friday, March 19, 2010 4:36 PM
To: Sen.Plale
Subject: Women Impacting Public Policy -- SB-469 / AB-696



March 19, 2010

Honorable Jeffrey T. Plale
State Capitol Building
Madison, WI 53791

Dear Senator Plale:

Women business owners in Wisconsin benefit from more choices in telecommunication services and access to the latest, state-of-the-art technologies. This is why members of Women Impacting Public Policy in Wisconsin support the modernization of telecommunication laws in the state through SB-469 / AB-696.

This legislation helps open the door to more technology investment by removing impediments put in place by outdated laws designed for an era when there was no competition. By treating all providers with the same, lighter touch of regulation, SB-469 / AB-696 will clear the way for more investments in broadband, more price competition and other new services as they become available.

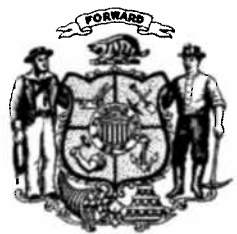
Wisconsin business owners and employers need the state to be a leader in attracting technology investments. Up-to-date infrastructure is key to our success, whether working with clients and customers in rural Wisconsin or around the world. On behalf of Wisconsin women business owners, please support SB-469 / AB-696.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Barbara Kasoff'.

Barbara Kasoff,
President

3/22/2010





450 Security Blvd. • Green Bay, WI 54313 • Phone: 920-617-7000 • Fax: 920-617-7329
P.O. Box 19079 • Green Bay, WI 54307-9079

www.n sight.com

March 22, 2010

Sen. Jeff Plale, Chair
State Capitol
Room 313 South
Madison WI 53707

Re: SB 469

Dear Sen. Plale:

My family became involved with Pulaski Merchants and Farmers Telephone Company in 1923. It is now Nsight Telservices. This year it is celebrating its 100 anniversary with over 200 stockholders most residing in Wisconsin. For the past 25 years our small telcos have had limited rate regulation due to the legislature's passage of the Regulation by Petition for small telcos. We've deployed a network throughout our rural area that provides between 3 mgbps and 6 mgbps broadband service to every customer. We need to continue to improving that network.

SB 469 and Senate Amendment 2 impose severe new regulations. Earlier AT&T proposals, like one passed in Michigan, could have provided some real benefit. This bill hurts our ability to continue. SB 469 SA 2 on page 10, lines 6 to 8 and page 4 lines 1 to 8, provides the PSC with jurisdiction over small telco rates for switched access service. These rates, paid by AT&T and other carriers, are for their use of our network. AT&T wants those rates reduced to the interstate level, which is below our costs.¹ We'd lose \$500,000 annually in revenue.

PSC jurisdiction means extensive and costly proceedings initiated by the PSC or a complaint by AT&T or other long distance carriers. An access rate reduction to interstate rates without funding for the loss revenue will cost small companies \$100,000s annually.

AT&T and Verizon, have abandoned the rural areas of Wisconsin by selling their rural exchanges while retaining their more urban ones. As a result it is up to smaller, rural telcos to provide modern communications networks in rural Wisconsin.

Giving the PSC authority over switched access rates that force small telcos into costly and extensive proceeding with AT&T is not fair for the small telcos or their subscribers.

To eliminate this, we request that the removal from the amendment the wording referred to above. We also request section 38 on page 10 line 4 remain because that gives small telcos the same exemption they enjoy for the past 25 years. If this can't be done, we support the Coalition that seeks to defeat SB 469.

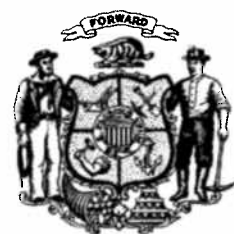
Respectfully,

Patrick D. Riordan, President

¹ Interstate access rates are also below costs, but the federal universe service fund provides funding to make up the difference between the access revenues received and the cost of providing the service.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Lynch, Abigail

From: Angelin Barrios [abarrios@wipp.org]
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2010 1:33 PM
To: Sen.Plale
Subject: PAi -- SB-469 / AB-696
Attachments: image001.png



March 22, 2010

Senator Jeffrey T. Plale
State Capitol Building
Madison, WI 53791

Dear Senator Plale,

As a Wisconsin women business owner, I can tell you that we benefit from more choices in telecommunication services and access to the latest, state-of-the-art technologies. Nationwide, we employ more than 16% of the US workforce and we depend upon access to technology and reliable networks. That is why WIPP members support modernization of telecom laws in the state through SB-469 / AB-696.

This legislation helps open the door to more technology investment by removing impediments put in place by outdated laws designed for an era when there was no competition. By treating all providers with the same, lighter touch of regulation, SB-469 / AB-696 will clear the way for more investments in broadband, more price competition and other new services as they become available.

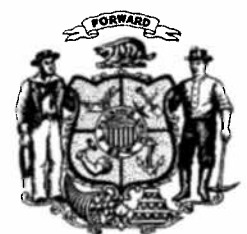
Wisconsin must be a leader in attracting technology investments. Up-to-date infrastructure is a key to our success, whether we're working with clients and customers in rural Wisconsin or around the world. On behalf of Wisconsin women business owners, please support SB-469 / AB-696.

Sincerely yours,

3/22/2010



Jayne Black
Legislative/Social Media Driver
PAI
1300 Enterprise Drive
De Pere, WI 54115
920-337-9906 ext 3450
jlblack@pai.com
www.pai.com





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Senator Jeff Plaie (Chair)
Senator Robert Cowles
Senator Jon Erpenbach
Senator Sheila Harsdorf
Senator Neal Kedzie
Senator Pat Kreitlow
Senator Robert Wirch

Re: SB 469

March 22, 2010

Senate Utilities Committee:

I am writing as the President/CEO of the Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC), in support of this Senate bill which is under consideration.

This legislation will move us towards a system which reflects the changes in technology and business expectations. Private industry depends on deployment and investment in the communications infrastructure. Smart regulatory reform as put forth in Senate bill 469 will encourage the continued investment which is necessary in this global economy.

Standard regulation which applies uniformly to all players will level costs for these companies and that usually encourages greater competition among providers.

CCEDC requests your support in bringing regulation in line with current business conditions and encouraging continued investment in this important resource.

Sincerely,

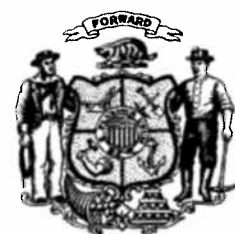
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlie Walker".

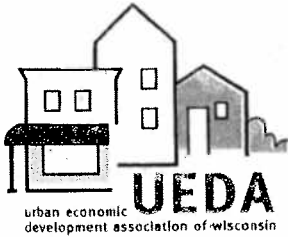
Charlie Walker
President/CEO

770 Scheidler Road, Suite 3 • Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
(715) 723-7150 • (800) 797-9976 • Fax: (715) 723-7140
e-mail: ccedc@chippewa-wi.com • www.chippewa-wi.com



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





2212 North Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Milwaukee, WI 53212

tel. 414 562 9904 fax 414 562 9906 www.uedawf.org

March 30, 2010

Dear Wisconsin Legislator,

I am writing to encourage your support and vote to pass SB 469 / AB 696; Wisconsin Regulatory Reform Legislation. SB 469 / AB 696 will modernize Wisconsin's telecom law by putting in place fair rules that will stimulate investment, sustain jobs and create real market competition benefitting consumers.

UEDA is an organization that strives to establish economic development and housing development initiatives that assist revitalization efforts in Wisconsin communities. We build capacity in the housing and economic development field through professional training, policy advocacy and collaboration with local businesses and non-profit organizations. UEDA also works to develop opportunities for businesses and we facilitate job creation through partnerships with workforce development agencies. We support initiatives that improve the quality of life for residents in Milwaukee County and the State Wisconsin. Therefore we support legislative proposals like SB 469 / AB 696 that encourages private investment and sustains jobs.

Your consideration of SB 469 / AB 696 comes at a critical time in our state's economy. As you deliberate on this legislation quality of life for many residents is at low point due to unemployment, home foreclosures and business closures. With these issues in mind, the state should deem a priority any legislation that incents investment from private companies and sustains jobs. Wisconsin telecom companies need out-dated regulations removed and a new regulatory model put in place that fosters fairness and competition. Failure to act could cause telecom companies to leave, move jobs and stop investment in the state.

I encourage the legislature to avoid additional impacts to quality of life in the state. Avoid the potential departure of telecom companies, loss of jobs and investment. Your support and vote to pass SB 469 / AB 696 will send a message that the State is open for business and the state wants to sustain private investment and jobs.

Sincerely,

William Johnson
Executive Director





wiredwisconsin

5027 W North Ave Milwaukee, WI 53208 phone 414.412.7814 fax 414.344.1645
www.wiredwisconsin.org info@wiredwisconsin.org

April 13, 2010

Senator Jeffrey Plale
State Capitol
PO Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882

Dear Senator Plale,

As the Wisconsin State Legislature continues the debate over SB-469/AB-696, we thought you would be interested in the enclosed editorial regarding a similar bill in Illinois. With positive editorials like this one, it's possible we'll soon see our neighbors to the south take steps to improve their business climate and encourage more tech growth and jobs.

Let's not let Wisconsin fall behind other states such as Illinois. With your help, Wisconsin can pass SB-469/AB-696, and enable us to compete effectively with other states for infrastructure investments and jobs. This important telecom modernization bill is backed by more than 30 state non-profits and business groups, and it was recently supported by our Assembly Utilities Committee, 12-0, and Senate Utilities Committee, 6-1.

These types of measures are taking hold in other states as well. In addition to the bill being now considered in Illinois, both houses of Ohio's Legislature recently passed similar measures, and Indiana passed a law like this a few years ago. Now is the time for Wisconsin to act, too.

On behalf of Wisconsin's economy and job growth, we urge you to help pass SB-469/AB-696 during the current legislative session.

Sincerely,

Thad Nation, Executive Director
Wired Wisconsin



SJ-R.COM

The State Journal-Register • Springfield, Ill. • The Oldest Newspaper in Illinois

Our Opinion: State telecommunications laws due for update

THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER [Springfield, Illinois]

Posted Apr 05, 2010

In 2001, your primary telephone most likely was a landline, which also served as your Internet connection. If you had a cell phone, it was a phone — with a numeric keypad and a screen sufficient to show the numbers as you dialed. You very likely never had sent a text message, if you even had heard of text messaging.

Your phone service came from the phone company, your cable TV from the cable company.

Such was the telecommunications world the last time Illinois updated its laws governing telecommunications.

We hardly need to explain that it's a vastly different telecommunications world today. If you still have a landline phone — nearly a quarter of Illinois households don't — it's as likely to come from your cable company as the phone company. Your cell phone is a portable voice and data device.

Texting is so pervasive that Illinois passed a law against doing it while driving.

You may get your cable TV from the phone company, bundled with high-speed Internet access, unless of course your cable company offers you a better deal on those services.

Given the dizzying technological changes that have become part of our daily lives in recent years, we believe it's critical that Illinois update the laws pertaining to telecommunications.

With the current law set to sunset on July 1, the time for that change is now. While we urge lawmakers to take on this issue this session, we also note the need for caution so that existing consumer protections aren't sacrificed to the interests of the telecommunications companies.

The Telecommunications Act now in place is structured largely on the original act that became law in 1985. It was rewritten in 2001 to reflect concerns of technology at that time and has been unchanged since then. In 2007 and 2009, lawmakers simply pushed back the sunset date.

The result is that Illinois still regulates telecommunications as if landline telephones are at the top of the communication hierarchy. A bill introduced in the Illinois House two weeks ago seeks to modernize the law to reflect the new, digital era.

Proponents believe doing so will boost the state's economy and create jobs by encouraging development of new telecommunications infrastructure. A better telecommunications framework, in turn, will make Illinois more efficient for existing businesses and more attractive for new ones, they believe.

First, though, a bit of background is in order.

Landline decline

The main force behind rewriting the Telecommunications Act is AT&T Illinois. AT&T until a few years ago was known as SBC, which had become the state's biggest phone company when it bought Ameritech in 1999. Ameritech had a poor customer service record at that time, so the state imposed service quality standards on the merged company as a condition of approving the merger. The result is that AT&T today can be fined \$30 million per year if it fails to complete repairs of interrupted phone service for 95 percent of its customers within a 24-hour period.

It never has had to pay that fine, which is good for its phone customers.

But AT&T says the threat of the fine forces it to put disproportionate resources toward a rapidly shrinking part of its customer base. Where AT&T in 2000 provided 91 percent of the state's landline phone service, it now provides 48 percent. In that same period, it has lost more than 52 percent of its landline business. In many cases, cell phones have replaced household lines. The entry of cable TV companies — which are not subject to Illinois telecommunication regulations — into the phone market also has had an effect.

“There's no segment of the marketplace, in terms of what customers use to communicate, that AT&T has even 50 percent of the market,” says Paul La Schiazza, president of AT&T Illinois. “But we're treated as if we're the only game in town. The people that have the majority of the share of the market have no regulation whatsoever.”

AT&T says releasing it from the decade-old service quality standards would allow it to more fully embrace new technology — such as expanding the reach of its U-Verse TV, phone and Internet service — and create hundreds of jobs in Illinois. La Schiazza points to Indiana and Michigan, where AT&T opened call centers after those states updated their laws.

Business groups have begun lining up behind the rewrite effort. They say that treating all telecommunications companies equally will create a more hospitable business climate in Illinois.

“If we don't adapt, if we don't encourage more investment that way with a regulatory structure that is level as well as certain I think we're going to be lagging in both investments and jobs not just in telecom but across the whole economy,” says Jeff Mays, a former state representative and president of the Illinois Business RoundTable, a Chicago-based business advocacy group.

Consumer concerns

That might be true, but the state must ensure that creating a level playing field for telecommunications companies doesn't leave consumers with less protection than they now have.

While there is ample competition now for high-end telecom customers — those who pay more than \$100 per month for Internet, cable TV, phone and other technology services — the existing service quality standards protect customers on the other end. These tend to be low-income and senior citizen customers who prefer basic landline phones without frills, says David Kolata, executive director of the Citizens Utility Board, the consumer watchdog group that monitors utilities in Illinois.

Rather than allowing AT&T out of its service quality standards, Kolata would like to see cable companies now in the telecom business brought under regulation.

The biggest concern for lawmakers and Illinois consumers as they consider this bill, Kolata says, is ensuring that AT&T makes good on its promises to expand service throughout the state.

This means bringing broadband service to rural areas and small towns in downstate Illinois, where it is desperately needed, not just in the lucrative Chicago metropolitan area.

And if AT&T is talking about creating hundreds of jobs in Illinois in exchange for release from the service quality standards, Kolata says it would be a good idea to have the company put it in writing.

"We're certainly willing to sit down and talk to them and work out reasonable compromises," says Kolata. "But what they seem to want to achieve is, if not complete deregulation, then certainly a big step in that direction."

AT&T and the future

The bill now in the House (House Bill 6425) contains numerous consumer protection provisions, but does not spell out where AT&T should focus its development.

Co-sponsor Kevin McCarthy, D-Orland Park, says he expects many such details to be worked out as debate begins on the bill. (A hearing is scheduled for April 13 before the House Telecommunications Committee, of which McCarthy is chairman.)

He believes that the \$30 million penalty that AT&T still must guard against is an anachronism that is no longer fair or necessary.

"When we put this penalty on them they had had some really severe service problems. So I think it was deserved at that time," McCarthy says. "I don't think you need to have these onerous burdens in there that at one time were deserved but I don't feel they're deserved any longer."

McCarthy is optimistic that the legislature will take on the Telecommunications Act rewrite this year. The prospect of job creation — both in the short term among telecom companies including AT&T and in the long run by improving Illinois' telecomm infrastructure — is too great an enticement to pass up in this of all years.

We hope that's true. There's a fundamental unfairness to imposing regulations on a company because it's labeled a "phone company" but not applying them to a company that provides wired phone service but is labeled a "cable company." And if Illinois is to be competitive in business and industry, it must have a modern system to govern what will be arguably its biggest economic force going forward.

We urge the General Assembly to take on this important issue now.



Lynch, Abigail

From: Sam Perlman [sam@doorcountybusiness.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 13, 2010 9:57 AM
To: Sam Perlman
Cc: 'GRUNER, ROBYN (ATTSI)'
Subject: Senate Bill 469/Assembly Bill 696

Dear Legislator:

This letter is in support of pending legislation to modernize Wisconsin's outdated telecom laws that we hope will be approved in Madison this month. Senate Bill 469/Assembly Bill 696 would help Wisconsin encourage investment, attract businesses and create jobs by simplifying the patchwork of laws affecting telecommunications.

The Northeast Wisconsin Regional Economic Partnership (NEWREP) is comprised of economic development professionals from sixteen northeast Wisconsin counties plus the Menominee Tribe. NEWREP provides hands-on support and programming for existing and prospective businesses. NEWREP members serve as the proverbial feet on the ground for economic development, providing local, personal services to area business communities. NEWREP's members have also elected to pursue in a collaborative manner initiatives dedicated to seeking solutions that will have a regional impact.

As a group representing sixteen counties, we recognize that the state needs to do everything it can to make Wisconsin competitive. That includes making it easy for our region to encourage the high-tech telecommunications infrastructure that today's existing and future businesses rely on.

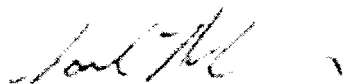
Today, the state governs different types of providers in different ways – even though they all provide the same service. This makes real competition impossible and erects roadblocks to investment and competition.

The pending legislation, which has support from nearly 40 chambers and other organizations, realigns Wisconsin's laws with today's competitive world of broadband, wireless, cable and other technologies. It creates a level playing field based on current laws in place today. And it keeps in place consumer protections that have worked well, without any cost to taxpayers.

Passing SB-469/AB-696 will enhance our region's economic and business development environment and the quality of life for people living and working throughout the NEWREP territory.

We urge our area legislators to help win approval of this bill and help Northeast Wisconsin and the entire state become a magnet for the growing technology businesses and employers of the 21st Century.

Sincerely,



Samuel Perlman
2010 President, NEWREP



Lynch, Abigail

From: John Casper [John@oshkoshchamber.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 14, 2010 9:12 AM
To: Sen.Hopper; Hintz, Gordon; Rep.Spanbauer
Cc: Sen.Carpenter; Sen.Coggs; Sen.Cowles; Sen.Darling; Sen.Decker; Sen.Ellis; Sen.Erpenbach; Sen.Fitzgerald; Sen.Grothman; Sen.Hansen; Sen.Harsdorf; Sen.Holperin; Sen.Hopper; Sen.Jauch; Sen.Kanavas; Sen.Kapanke; Sen.Kedzie; Sen.Kreitlow; Sen.Lasee; Sen.Lassa; Sen.Lazich; Sen.Lehman; Sen.Leibham; Sen.Miller; Sen.Olsen; Sen.Plale; Sen.Risser; Sen.Robson; Sen.Schultz; Sen.Sullivan; Sen.Taylor; Sen.Vinehout; Sen.Wirch; Rep.Ballweg; Rep.Barca; Rep.Benedict; Rep.Berceau; Rep.BernardSchaber; Rep.Bies; Rep.Black; Rep.Brooks; Rep.Clark; Rep.Colon; Rep.Cullen; Rep.Danou; Rep.Davis; Rep.Dexter; Rep.Fields; Rep.Fitzgerald; Rep.Friske; Rep.Garthwaite; Rep.Gottlieb; Rep.Grigsby; Rep.Gunderson; Rep.Gundrum; Rep.Hebl; Rep.Hilgenberg; Rep.Hintz; Rep.Hixson; Rep.Honadel; Rep.Hraychuck; Hubler, Mary; Rep.Huebsch; Rep.Jorgensen; Rep.Kaufert; Rep.Kerkman; Rep.Kessler; Rep.Kleefisch; Rep.Knodl; Rep.Kramer; Rep.Krusick; Rep.LeMahieu; Rep.Loethian; Rep.Mason; Rep.Meyer; Rep.Milroy; Rep.Molepske; Rep.Montgomery; Rep.Mursau; Rep.Murtha; Rep.Nass; Rep.Nelson; Rep.Nerison; Rep.Newcomer; Rep.Nygren; Rep.Ott; Rep.OttJ; Rep.Parisi; Rep.Pasch; Rep.Petersen; Rep.Petrowski; Rep.Pocan; Rep.Pope-Roberts; Rep.Pridemore; Rep.Radcliffe; Rep.Rhoades; Rep.Richards; Rep.Ripp; Rep.Roth; Rep.Roys; Rep.Schneider; Rep.Seidel; Rep.Sheridan; Rep.Sherman; Rep.Shilling; Rep.Sinicki; Rep.Smith; Rep.Soletski; Rep.Spanbauer; Rep.Staskunas; Rep.Steinbrink; Rep.Stone; Rep.Strachota; Rep.Suder; Rep.Tauchen; Rep.Toles; Rep.Townsend; Rep.Turner; Rep.Van Akkeren; Rep.Van Roy; Rep.Vos; Rep.Vruwink; Rep.Vukmir; Rep.WilliamsA; Rep.WilliamsM; Rep.Wood; Rep.Young; Rep.Zepnick; Ziegelbauer, Bob; Rep.Zigmunt; Rep.Zipperer

Subject: Senate Bill 469 & Assembly Bill 696

On behalf of the Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce, I am asking for your support for Senate Bill 469 & Assembly Bill 696. These bills address outdated regulations in the telecommunications industry and will create a level playing field among all phone service providers. A fair, modern system will ensure that all phone service providers will compete under the same rules, ensuring that a competitive environment is created and encourages investment and innovation while preserving consumer protection.

Senate Bill 469 & Assembly Bill 696 will level the current playing field that encourages competition by:

- Establishing one set of rules for all phone service providers.
- Retaining Wisconsin's strong consumer protection laws.
- Ensuring all customers receive targeted rebates and promotions, while enabling more aggressive bundle pricing; and,
- Keeping in place key Public Service Commission requirements governing privacy, contributions to the universal service fund, caps on late-payments, along with jurisdiction over wholesale rates, interconnection requirements and transfer of customers.

Support for Senate Bill 469 & Assembly Bill 696 will boost consumer choice, while promoting job growth and economic investment.

I hope we can count on your support.

John Casper
Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce
920-303-2265 Extension 18
john@oshkoshchamber.com
www.oshkoshchamber.com



Lynch, Abigail

From: Bill Esbeck [bill.esbeck@wsta.info]
Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2010 2:20 PM
To: Bill Esbeck
Cc: Chris LaRowe; Tom Moore; JULIUS, GERALD (ATTSI)
Subject: Telecommunications Coalition Supporting AB 696 and SB 469
Importance: High
Attachments: AB 696 and SB 469 coalition memo of support 4 15 2010.pdf

Members of the Wisconsin State Legislature,

We respectfully request your support of Assembly Bill 696 and Senate Bill 469, the first significant efforts to update Wisconsin's telecommunications statutes since 1993 Wisconsin Act 496.

Collectively, we represent a diverse group of small and large telecommunications providers offering service to the majority of Wisconsin's landline customers. Our residential and business customers live and work in rural, suburban and urban communities throughout our state. We have come together to support this legislation because we recognize the consumer benefits that will result from updates to the statutes governing Wisconsin's highly competitive telecommunications marketplace.

Please review the attached memorandum and contact us with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Bill Esbeck, WSTA Tom Moore, WCCA Scott VanderSanden, AT&T

*William C. Esbeck
Executive Director
Wisconsin State Telecommunications Association
121 East Wilson Street, Suite 102
Madison, WI 53703*

*O - 608.256.8866 x14
F - 608.256.2676
C - 608.469.7171
www.wsta.info*



Communications

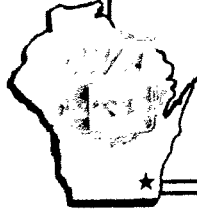
Local 4603

6511 W. BLUEMOUND RD.
MILWAUKEE, WI 53213-4090

(414) 258-4010

(414) 258-9440 — Recording

(414) 258-8542 — FAX



Workers of America

(AFFILIATED WITH AFL-CIO)

April 15, 2010

Dear Senator,

As President of Communications Workers of America Local 4603 in Milwaukee, I want to let you know we are in opposition to SB 469/AB-696 in its present format. CWA is the Union who represents the workers at AT&T.

We believe more time is needed to evaluate this piece of legislation to make sure that consumers and employees of AT&T are not harmed by this bill. This bill will pretty much deregulate local telephone service in Wisconsin.

CWA has not been given the opportunity to give any input on this bill along with many other groups.

We believe consumers will not be well served by SB 469/AB-696 and it will ultimately hasten the loss of good paying jobs in Wisconsin.

There is no rush to pass this piece of legislation. All parties should be given the opportunity to be heard.

We have concerns about removing PSC oversight which will result in less consumer protection. AT&T and other telecommunications utilities would no longer be obligated to provide service to all areas of the State, file financial reports or need approval for rate changes. They would decide if they are classified as a telecommunication utility or alternate telecommunications utility, not the State.

Service to rural areas could be at risk. Not all areas of the State have access to cell phone service.

If AT&T follows Verizon's lead it could result in AT&T getting out of the land line business all together which will result in significant job loss.

AT&T has steadily been moving jobs outside of Wisconsin. At the end of March approximately 35 workers were released from the Tier-2 Support Center in Milwaukee. The jobs created by the video legislation are now disappearing. The build for U-verse in Wisconsin has pretty much come to a halt.

Any legislation that is passed should be in the best interest of the Citizens of Wisconsin, other telecommunications providers and the Workers of AT&T.

I would ask you not support SB-469 and AB-696 at this time. Further evaluation is needed to determine the full impact of this legislation.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "George Walls".

George Walls, President
CWA Local 4603



April 16, 2010

Honorable Members of the Wisconsin Legislature
Madison, WI

Dear Legislator:

As groups and businesses that are involved on a daily basis with technology, we are writing to ask for your support in passing SB 469 / AB 696.

Those of us in the tech industry have witnessed firsthand how technological advancements in Wisconsin's communities benefit its residents. The passage of SB 469 / AB 696 would increase competition in this sector, encouraging investment into the technological innovations that will drive Wisconsin's economy, attract more high-tech businesses to our state and provide Wisconsin consumers with quality job opportunities and the communication tools they need everyday.

For consumers to receive the full benefits of a competitive market, lawmakers must ensure that the same rules apply to all providers. Creating a level playing field promotes competition, drives innovation and spurs exciting technological advances. SB 469 / AB 696 is essential to bringing parity to Wisconsin's telecommunications providers, encouraging investment and promoting a business-friendly technology environment in our state.

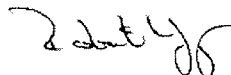
This bill will bring Wisconsin's telecommunications industry in step with today's technology and communications innovations. Under current regulations, traditional landline providers are treated differently than newer phone companies – a system that discourages investment in new communications technology and innovative services. The passage of SB 469 / AB 696 will enable all telecommunications providers to compete under the same rules – creating a strong technology environment that attracts investment, promotes economic growth and provides Wisconsinites with job opportunities.

SB 469 / AB 696 is a terrific opportunity for Wisconsin to secure its future as a state that embraces technology and offers its communities every possible benefit of a thriving telecom sector. Your help in passing SB 469 / AB 696 will be a tremendous step in bringing the benefits of competition and technology throughout Wisconsin. We hope we can count on your support.

Sincerely,

Christopher Hytry Derrington

Christopher Hytry Derrington, Co-Founder,
Director & CEO
Rural America OnShore Sourcing, Inc.
Two Rivers



Robert Young, President and CEO
Paradigm Sensors
Milwaukee

Daphne M. Wilson

Daphne M. Wilson, President
Zoe Engineering LLC
Milwaukee

Jeff Hoffman

Jeff Hoffman, President
Independent Business Association of Wisconsin
Madison

Mike Hough

Mike Hough
PC Guard Dogs
Milwaukee

Tom Still

Tom Still, President
Wisconsin Technology Council
Madison

Thad Nation

Thad Nation, Executive Director
Wired Wisconsin
Milwaukee

c: Gov. Jim Doyle



Lynch, Abigail

From: Amy L. Boyer [boyer@hamilton-consulting.com]
Sent: Monday, April 19, 2010 3:18 PM
To: The Hamilton Consulting Group
Subject: Support for SB 469/ AB 696
Attachments: image001.png; oledata.mso

**Wisconsin Economic Development Association Inc.**

TO: Members, Wisconsin State Legislature
FROM: Amy Boyer, on behalf of
Wisconsin Economic Development Association
DATE: April 19, 2010
RE: Support for SB 469/AB 696

The Wisconsin Economic Development Association (WEDA), a statewide organization of approximately 450 economic development professionals, strongly encourages you to support SB 649 and AB 696 which update the current telecommunication statutes.

WEDA advocates for a strong and progressive economic development environment in Wisconsin. Regulatory reform which encourages infrastructure investment is necessary for Wisconsin businesses and residents. This legislation serves as a timely update to the telecommunication laws which will streamline the regulatory process and encourage service providers to invest in Wisconsin's infrastructure.

Consumers and business depend on high speed, high quality, state of the art products and services to communicate and compete in today's economy. The regulations which govern today's telecommunications industry were written for a different era and need to be updated to reflect the significant changes in technology. In today's competitive telecommunications sector, consumers and businesses demand high speed internet connections, mobile voice and data services and evolving technology options such as a voice over internet protocol (VoIP). Wisconsin law needs to reflect these market realities and encourage the continued investment in advanced communications services.

It is essential to give Wisconsin businesses the competitive edge in economic development and the tools necessary to attract and retain business is essential. Wisconsin businesses need to compete in a global economy which is no small task. This is why WEDA advocates for changes which support Wisconsin's long term economic viability and competitiveness and we support SB 469/AB 696.





“Advocating for All Generations”

The Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, statewide membership organization that was founded in 1978.

Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups

Intergenerational Leadership Development • Education • Advocacy • Elder Law Center

To: Members of the Wisconsin State Legislature
From: Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups
RE: SB 469/ AB 696
Date: April 21, 2010

The Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups strongly opposes SB 469/AB696, the Telco deregulation bill. Though there may be a reason to review the current law relating to telecommunication services in Wisconsin, we don't think it should be done by AT&T lawyers, behind closed doors, and without the input of Wisconsin senior citizens.

While it is true that more and more Wisconsin citizens are choosing to use wireless devices and the internet as a means of communication, there are still 3 million customers in Wisconsin who use wired phone services and we simply cannot abandon them. Of those 3 million customers a significant number of them are elderly citizens who live in rural parts of the state where wired service is the only option available.

SB469/AB696 would totally deregulate local phone service allowing local providers to determine who should receive service along with the cost and quality of service without any oversight by the Public Service Commission. Presumably, the only recourse these customers would have is to contact their state legislators for relief.

While we are thankful to Representative Jeff Smith for his amendment that addresses some of our concerns, the version of AB 696, which passed the State Assembly last evening, would be a disaster for Wisconsin senior citizens. We urge the State Senate to move the bill to the Joint Finance Committee where it can receive a proper hearing.

Contact:

Nino Amato, President
Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups
608-221-6105/608-514-3317
namato@cwag.org



April 21, 2010

RE: Please oppose telephone deregulation legislation AB 696 and SB 469

Dear Member of the Wisconsin Senate:

The Citizens Utility Board urges you to oppose telephone deregulation legislation AB 696 and SB 469.

Although there are over 4 million cellphones in Wisconsin, there are still over 3 million landlines, which means hundreds of thousands of households and thousands of businesses still rely on landline service.

AB 696 and SB 469 would repeal almost all of the consumer protections provided by the Public Service Commission regarding landline service. With this radical deregulation legislation, telephone utilities like AT&T:

- would no longer need to provide reasonable service at reasonable rates;
- could change telephone rates or stop providing service at their discretion;
- could charge customers discriminatory rates for similar service, thus favoring preferred customers while charging everyone else higher rates;
- would no longer need to maintain important equipment and facilities, such as the lines going to homes and businesses;
- would no longer need to file financial information with the PSC, allowing them to evade appropriate regulation and charge whatever they want for service;

Given these concerns, we urge you to vote against AB 696 and SB 469.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlie Higley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Charlie Higley
Executive Director





wiredwisconsin

5027 W North Ave Milwaukee, WI 53208 phone 414.412.7814 fax 414.344.1645
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July 14, 2010

Senator Jeffrey Plale
State Capitol
PO Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Senator Plale,

We wrote to you several weeks ago to urge action on modernized telecommunication rules for Wisconsin, following news that roughly 125 state residents will lose their jobs in the coming months as consumers increasingly move away from traditional landlines towards newer technologies.

We also mentioned that it was only a matter of time before states like Illinois and Ohio – which recently passed telecom modernization legislation – started to see new technological investment in their respective states. It turned out to only be a matter of weeks before the first new investment began.

Attached are two stories from Illinois and Ohio that demonstrate the positive economic impact telecom legislation has had on these two states. One is from the *Akron Beacon Journal*, which discusses \$120 million in new, high-tech infrastructure and equipment related to mobile services in the city. The other is from the *Chicago Sun-Times*, which discusses the building of 80 new cellular towers and the upgrading of 300 existing towers to expand high-speed access in Illinois.

If Wisconsin is to see similar investment – and stem the job losses from changing consumer behavior – it is imperative that our state act to pass telecom modernization legislation similar to what passed in Illinois and Ohio, and similar to SB 469/AB 696, which unfortunately did not pass in the Wisconsin State Legislature during the last legislative session.

I once again urge you to consider passing modernized telecom rules as soon as possible when the Legislature reconvenes next year. It is vitally important to our economy that Wisconsin continues to be competitive with other states in the Midwest. We cannot afford to fall any further behind, and updated telecom rules are exactly what we need to ensure this doesn't happen.

Sincerely,

Thad Nation, Executive Director
Wired Wisconsin