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53 Congress should recognize the strong public policy arguments in favor of
54 local control. In addition, consumers can benefit from both real competition and
55 effective regulation. A market for an essential service that has few competitors
56 and high entry costs cannot be truly competitive. Federal policy that facilitates
57 consolidation and limits any entity’s ability to participate in a market will not
58 bring about benefits to consumers. Moreover, in the transition to competitive
59 markets, regulation that protects consumers from monopoly pricing and
60 predatory pricing must be enhanced.

61 To provide communities with needed advanced communications services
62 and pro-consumer policies, NWPPA urges Congress to:

- 63 • Continue to support the entry of *any entity*, including public power
64 systems, into the marketplace for advanced communications services;
- 65 • Adopt pro-competitive policies that foster true competition in the
66 advanced communications marketplace. Federal policy should encourage
67 the deployment of competing broadband platforms including, but not
68 necessarily limited to, fiber optic, power line, satellite and wireless;
- 69 • Implement policies that promote a competitive marketplace for advanced
70 communications services delivered over broadband platforms, including
71 voice over Internet protocol and other IP enabled services;
- 72 • Strengthen consumer protections, if a transition to competitive markets
73 for advanced communications services is to succeed, including:
 - 74 • Careful review and conditioning of mergers and acquisitions that
75 reduce the number of competitors or create market power that
76 interferes with effective competition;
 - 77 • The elimination of artificial barriers to entry;
 - 78 • Ensuring that low-income customers have access to essential services;
 - 79 • Providing regulatory agencies with the necessary authority and
80 resources needed to adequately police markets to prevent monopoly
81 pricing, including predatory pricing; and
- 82 • Preserve current federal law with regard to local control by public power
83 systems over pole attachments and rights-of-way. Public power systems
84 should retain their ability to manage poles, ducts and conduits in safe,
85 efficient and competitively neutral manner and to recover from users of
86 these facilities the full costs associated with such use.