

By Mr. Hodgkins of Lee, petition of Christopher J. Hodgkins and other members of the House for legislation to further regulate rates for cable antenna television systems. Government Regulations.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety-Two.

AN ACT FURTHER REGULATING CATV RATES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 166A of the General Laws is hereby
2 amended by striking out, in lines 1 and 2, the words "executive
3 officer of community affairs" and inserting in place thereof the
4 words: — department of public utilities.

1 SECTION 2. Said chapter 166A is hereby further amended by
2 striking out section 15 and inserting in place thereof the following
3 section: —

4 Section 15. CATV systems shall file with the department of
5 public utilities schedules, in such form as the department shall
6 from time to time prescribe, showing all rates to be thereafter
7 charged or collected from subscribers together with all forms of
8 contracts thereafter to be used in connection therewith. Rates in
9 such a schedule may, from time to time, be changed by any such
10 system by filing a schedule setting forth the charged rates, but until
11 the effective date of any such change, no different rate shall be
12 charged, received or collected by the system filing such a schedule
13 from those specified in the schedule then in effect; provided,
14 however, that a system may continue to charge, receive and collect
15 rates in accordance with a contract heretofore lawfully entered
16 into whenever the department receives notice of any changes
17 proposed to be made which represents an increase in rates it shall
18 notify the attorney general of the same forthwith, and shall
19 thereafter hold a public hearing and make an investigation as to

20 the propriety of such proposed changes after first causing notice
21 of the time, place and subject matter of such hearing to be
22 published at least twenty-one days before such hearing in such
23 local newspapers as the department may select. Unless the
24 department otherwise authorizes, the rates set forth in such a
25 schedule shall not become effective until the first day of the month
26 next after the expiration of fourteen days from the filing thereof.
27 So much of such schedules shall be printed in such form and
28 distributed and published in such manner as said department may
29 require.

30 The department, either upon complaint or upon its own motion,
31 may investigate the propriety of any proposed rate and may,
32 pending such investigation and decision thereon by order served
33 upon the system affected thereby suspend the taking effect thereof,
34 from time to time, but not for a period longer than ten months
35 beyond the time when such rate would otherwise become effective.
36 An order by the department directing a change in any schedule
37 filed shall have the same effect as if a schedule with such changes
38 were filed by the system and shall become effective from such time
39 as the department shall order.