

I encourage each member of the House Commerce and Labor Committee to vote against HB 2108, in committee - it is misguided, irrational, and anti-business. I'm one of the "bureaucrats who run local governments" Ms. Byron references in her dismissive letter to the Roanoke Times, serving as mayor of a locality in Southwest VA. I'm also a partner in a software company, based in Salem, VA, who has clients worldwide and knows the requirements of my company and the offerings of the incumbent providers - their effective broadband speeds and their prices.

I am and was a proponent of the Roanoke Valley Broadband Authority because the local providers could not and would not provide the broadband speeds necessary for my company, and others, to continue to successfully operate in Southwest VA. Furthermore, my community is home to a four-year college, a significant private healthcare facility, an international manufacturer, and a VA hospital that could not adequately acquire the broadband speeds necessary to function in today's economy. I would be happy to share the information provided to me by the sales reps of Comcast, Cox, Verizon, et al., regarding the actual speeds offered in my community and their costs, including current invoices we're paying. It differs greatly from what lobbyists and advertisements report.

I find it ironic that a delegate representing a district that contains a university with a significant Internet presence (a client of my company) is attempting to prevent organizations throughout the Commonwealth from having the ability to compete via the Internet more efficiently.

This is not about delivery of Internet service to the home (a la Bristol). It is about providing all businesses (rural, urban, and suburban) the opportunity to compete in an economy that demands speed, value, and effectiveness via the Internet.

I urge you to vote against HB 2108.

Best,

Randy

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