

(Not) buying the election

Longmont has had a city-owned, fiber-optic ring for more than a decade but state law prohibited the City from offering internet services without a public referendum. Wanting to encourage economic development, Longmont attempted to regain its authority in 2009, but a \$250,000 campaign of lies with TV ads, glossy mailers, and full page newspaper buys from big cable companies killed prospects for competition.



Colorado

After the 2009 vote, citizens realized they had been fooled by the slick cable marketing campaign. In 2011, a larger grassroots mobilization supported a referendum for Longmont to use its fiber network. This time, it passed with 60% of the vote despite big cable spending even more on it – \$300,000 in total. It was a big victory for local self-reliance: the pro-cable-company campaign had plenty of money but couldn't even find a local spokesperson.

Longmont's Referendum

Grassroots

\$5,000



money

13,238



votes

\$0.38



spent per vote

11

Mayor, City Council,
Challenging Candidates



endorsements

2

Times-Call, Boulder Weekly



newspaper support

Big Cable

\$300,000

8,529

\$35.17

0

0

It is chilling when a cable company can buy 40% of the vote in a referendum despite having no visible support among local residents, political parties, or media outlets.

For more information <http://bit.ly/long-ref>

muninetworks.org