

SENATE BILL 246

Unofficial Copy  
C2

2001 Regular Session  
11r1414  
CF 11r0624

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By: **Senators Hogan, Forehand, and Roesser**  
Introduced and read first time: January 25, 2001  
Assigned to: Finance

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A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Telecommunications - Competition - Task Force**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing a Task Force to encourage and monitor competition  
4 among providers of telecommunications services in the State; requiring the Task  
5 Force to meet a minimum number of times annually; requiring the Task Force to  
6 submit an annual report of its findings to the General Assembly; providing for  
7 the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the establishment of a Task  
8 Force to encourage and monitor competition among telecommunications service  
9 providers.

10 BY adding to

11 Article - Public Utility Companies  
12 Section 8-304  
13 Annotated Code of Maryland  
14 (1998 Volume and 2000 Supplement)

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
16 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

17 **Article - Public Utility Companies**

18 8-304.

19 (A) THERE IS A TASK FORCE ON COMPETITION AMONG  
20 TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE PROVIDERS.

21 (B) THE PURPOSE OF THE TASK FORCE IS TO ENCOURAGE AND MONITOR  
22 COMPETITION AMONG PROVIDERS OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN THE  
23 STATE.

24 (C) THE TASK FORCE CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING 17 MEMBERS:

25 (1) TWO DELEGATES, APPOINTED BY THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF  
26 DELEGATES;

1 (2) TWO SENATORS FROM THE MARYLAND SENATE, APPOINTED BY THE  
2 PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE;

3 (3) ONE MEMBER FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL,  
4 APPOINTED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL;

5 (4) THE PEOPLE'S COUNSEL, OR THE PEOPLE'S COUNSEL'S DESIGNEE;

6 (5) THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND  
7 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, OR THE SECRETARY'S DESIGNEE; AND

8 (6) THE FOLLOWING 10 MEMBERS, APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR:

9 (I) ONE MEMBER FROM THE COMMISSION;

10 (II) FOUR MEMBERS FROM AMONG THE COMPETITIVE LOCAL  
11 EXCHANGE CARRIERS OF THE STATE, WITH NO MORE THAN ONE REPRESENTATIVE  
12 FROM THE SAME COMPANY;

13 (III) ONE MEMBER REPRESENTING A CONSUMER ADVOCACY  
14 GROUP; AND

15 (IV) ONE MEMBER FROM EACH OF THE FOLLOWING COMPANIES:

16 1. AT&T;

17 2. VERIZON;

18 3. MCI; AND

19 4. SPRINT.

20 (D) THE GOVERNOR SHALL APPOINT A CHAIRPERSON OF THE TASK FORCE  
21 FROM AMONG THE TASK FORCE MEMBERS.

22 (E) A MEMBER WHO LEAVES THE TASK FORCE SHALL BE REPLACED BY A  
23 SUCCESSOR CHOSEN BY THE APPOINTING AUTHORITY WITH AUTHORITY OVER THAT  
24 MEMBER'S POSITION.

25 (F) THE COMMISSION SHALL PROVIDE STAFF SUPPORT FOR THE TASK FORCE  
26 TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE WITHIN EXISTING BUDGETING RESOURCES.

27 (G) THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TASK FORCE ARE TO:

28 (1) STUDY AND PROMOTE COMPETITION AMONG PROVIDERS OF  
29 TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN THE STATE;

30 (2) MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REMOVING BARRIERS TO  
31 INCREASED COMPETITION AMONG PROVIDERS OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
32 SERVICES TO THE RESIDENTIAL AREAS OF THE STATE;

1           (3)     MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REMOVING BARRIERS TO  
2 INCREASED COMPETITION AMONG PROVIDERS OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
3 SERVICES TO SMALL BUSINESSES IN THE STATE;

4           (4)     ENSURE THAT CONSUMERS, PARTICULARLY CONSUMERS WITH  
5 LIMITED INCOMES, WILL BE PROTECTED DURING A TRANSITION PERIOD TO  
6 INCREASED COMPETITION AMONG PROVIDERS OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
7 SERVICES IN THE STATE;

8           (5)     ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGH SPEED BROAD BAND  
9 OFFERINGS THROUGHOUT THE STATE;

10          (6)     CLOSELY MONITOR THE EFFORTS OF THE COMMISSION IN  
11 ENCOURAGING COMPETITION AMONG PROVIDERS OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
12 SERVICES; AND

13          (7)     GENERALLY ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT AND  
14 IMPLEMENTATION OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY.

15       (H)     EACH MEMBER OF THE TASK FORCE SHALL SERVE WITHOUT  
16 COMPENSATION BUT SHALL BE ENTITLED TO REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES  
17 UNDER THE STANDARD STATE TRAVEL REGULATIONS.

18       (I)     THE TASK FORCE SHALL MEET AT LEAST FOUR TIMES A YEAR FOR A  
19 PERIOD OF 2 YEARS, AT THE TIMES AND PLACES THAT ITS CHAIRPERSON  
20 DETERMINES.

21       (J)     ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31 OF EACH YEAR, THE TASK FORCE SHALL,  
22 SUBJECT TO § 2-1246 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, SUBMIT AN ANNUAL  
23 REPORT OF ITS FINDINGS, INCLUDING ANY PROPOSED LEGISLATION, TO THE  
24 GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

25       SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
26 October 1, 2001. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and 3 months and, at  
27 the end of December 31, 2003, with no further action required by the General  
28 Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.