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Statement by U.S. Conference of Mayors CEO & Executive Director Tom Cochran on FCC's Actions Against Local Governments and Their Property Rights.

Washington, DC — Below is a statement by U.S. Conference of Mayors CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran on the FCC's actions yesterday against local governments and their property rights:

"The U.S. Conference of Mayors strongly opposes actions by the Federal Communications Commission that will subordinate local governments and their property rights to the benefit of the nation's communications providers.

With little advance notice or engagement with local and state governments, the FCC action — which effectively prohibits local and state actions or policies having the effect of barring for some duration a private telecommunications company for accessing the public's rights-of-way — immediately disrupts local management regimes for the sole purpose of granting one group special federal protections and rights.

It also upends a key provision of federal law that was enacted overwhelmingly by Congress in 1996 to protect and respect local and state government property rights and their authority to manage these public assets.

For more than a century and at great cost, local governments with states have had the day-to-day responsibility for managing all aspects of this local public property, and are charged to do so in ways that benefit all citizens and businesses, not just one class of users. The FCC lacks the technical experts to facilitate broadband deployments. It also lacks the local knowledge needed to manage city streets, sidewalks and other public property. As such, the Conference respectfully calls on the Commission to reconsider this Order and urges the agency to develop a process to fairly and fully review the enormity and complexity of these issues."