

## Castle Supports Competition for Cable Companies, Lower Rates for Customers -- June 9, 2006

Washington, D.C. -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle last night voted for legislation in the House of Representatives that will bring choice and competition to TV and Internet services. The Communications Opportunity, Promotion, and Enhancement (COPE) Act of 2006 works to encourage innovation and create competition between providers, subsequently lowering rates for customers. In fact, according to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), in areas where there is already true cable competition, cable rates are typically 15 percent lower.

"I believe the passage of this legislation in the House is a key first step to removing barriers to competition and will hopefully benefit Delawareans by leading to lower prices and faster, more advanced technology. All consumers deserve to have a choice when spending their money, and picking a cable company should be no exception. I believe this legislation will help bring our telecom laws into the 21st century and I hope to Senate will move forward in considering these provisions at the earliest possible date," Castle said.

The COPE Act is outlined below:

- Allows telephone companies to obtain a national franchise from the FCC to offer video services, while at the same time granting cable companies national franchises for similar services.
  
- Clarifies that all companies are still free to negotiate local and statewide franchises and that companies must respect existing franchise areas established by local governments.
  
- The COPE Act will result in faster Internet connections and new services for consumers due to competition.
  
- Includes strong anti-discrimination protections, which prohibit companies from denying access to its cable service to any group of potential subscribers because of the income of that group.