



CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD

Fighting for Illinois Consumers

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STATEMENT BY CUB EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DAVID KOLATA ON AT&T LEGISLATION

CUB is disappointed that AT&T has pushed through state legislation that would eventually allow it to end traditional landline phone service in its Illinois territory. However, AT&T still must get federal approval to end traditional home phone service, so CUB will continue the fight to protect landline customers as the battle moves to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

We thank the thousands of people who sent messages and made calls asking officials in Springfield to oppose AT&T's legislation.

Background

*On Saturday, July 1, the General Assembly voted to override Gov. Bruce Rauner's veto of AT&T's legislation. (The final bill number was House Bill 1811.) The Illinois House voted 90-22 to override the veto, and the Illinois Senate voted 43-1.

*HB 1811 would abolish the state requirement that AT&T offer traditional landline phone service. That would set in motion a process that would eventually allow the company to send "cease to offer" notices to its 1.2 million business and residential landline customers in Illinois. (AT&T still needs to get final FCC approval to end landline service in its Illinois territory.)

*The legislation follows a national business model for AT&T, which has made about \$58 billion in profits over the past five years. The company is pushing customers onto services that are better for its profit margins, but tend to be less reliable, such as wireless and Internet-based phones.

*Today's legislative action does not mean that traditional landline phone service is ending immediately. AT&T still needs to get final FCC approval to end landline service in its Illinois territory, a process that would take months, at least.

CUB is Illinois' leading nonprofit utility watchdog group. Created by the Illinois Legislature, CUB opened its doors in 1984 to represent the interests of residential and small-business utility customers. Since then, CUB has saved consumers more than \$20 billion by helping to block rate hikes and secure refunds. For more details, call CUB's Consumer Hotline at 1-800-669-5556 or visit CUB's award-winning website, www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org.

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