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MAYOR HAHN ANNOUNCES UNPRECEDENTED PROTECTIONS FOR CABLE CONSUMERS

Los Angeles - Mayor Jim Hahn announced today that the Board of Information Technology Commissioners (BITC), has developed unprecedented protections for cable consumers. At Mayor Hahn's request, the Board has taken an aggressive stance to make sure that cable services are delivered in a timely, efficient and fair manner while also establishing base-line standards and other operational directives to ensure the highest customer service standards for cable subscribers in Los Angeles.

"These new measures protect the people of Los Angeles," said Mayor Hahn. "This a huge step forward to assure that all Los Angeles cable subscribers are guaranteed the services and treatment they deserve."

BITC, at its meeting yesterday, released for public comment a proposed bill of rights for cable consumers. The Bill of Rights is part of a comprehensive rewrite of the City's Cable Subscriber Service Standards, which were also released in draft form at yesterday's BITC meeting for comment.

"The Information Technology Commission's proposed Cable Subscriber Bill of Rights spells out in plain English what rights Los Angeles cable subscribers should expect," said Commission President Dean Hansell. "For example, the Bill of Rights provides that cable subscribers are entitled to high-quality cable television service including a clear picture and sound. Consumers under the Bill of Rights are also entitled to receive dependable service, free of unnecessary outages."

The proposed new Cable Subscriber Bill of Rights and the Cable Subscriber Service Standards are comprehensive and pro-consumer and will put Los Angeles at the forefront of providing protection for cable subscribers. It replaces the nearly decade-old Multi-channel Video Provider Consolidated Consumer Service Standards. The Bill of Rights and the new Standards aim to eliminate the substandard services to which some cable subscribers have grown

accustomed by requiring cable operators to provide high-quality cable television service: this includes clear picture and sound, dependable service, easy-to-understand and accurate monthly statements with itemized billing, and the right to a free installation if a cable operator fails to show up for an installation appointment.

Other progressive elements include the requirement that cable companies provide Spanish-speaking consumers with a Spanish-speaking customer service representative during regular hours of operation. It also strongly urges cable operators to provide translators for other common languages within certain franchise areas. The Cable Standards expands the mandate that all cable operators treat all customers and cable company employees equally, without discrimination to include sexual orientation, income, and geographic location.

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