



General Assembly

February Session, 2016

Raised Bill No. 104

LCO No. 1361



Referred to Committee on GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION
AND ELECTIONS

Introduced by:
(GAE)

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE STATE CIVIC NETWORK.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General
Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subdivision (45) of subsection (a) of section 16-1 of the
2 2016 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following
3 is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2016*):

4 (45) ["The Connecticut Television Network" means the General
5 Assembly's state-wide twenty-four-hour state public affairs
6 programming service, separate and distinct from community access
7 channels] "The State Civic Network" means the state-wide cable
8 programming channel and Internet web site established under section
9 2 of this act that provides (A) live and archived coverage of state
10 government and civic affairs, and (B) access to information about the
11 processes and actions of the legislative, executive and judicial
12 branches;

13 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2016*) (a) There is established a State
14 Civic Network to provide, through a dedicated, basic tier cable
15 programming channel and an Internet web site, television coverage,
16 live transmission of video and audio material over the Internet and

17 digital video archives of proceedings impacting the state, including,
18 but not limited to: (1) Legislative meetings, hearings and sessions; (2)
19 arguments before the Supreme Court, Appellate Court and Superior
20 Court; (3) executive state agency hearings and meetings; (4) public
21 policy discussions, debates, press conferences and civic events; (5)
22 election coverage and coverage related to the electoral process; and (6)
23 studio productions and educational videos providing additional
24 information on the working of the government of the state.

25 (b) The State Civic Network shall be managed by a nonprofit,
26 nonpartisan organization that is funded by subscribers of community
27 antenna television systems pursuant to 47 USC 531 et seq. and selected
28 in accordance with section 3 of this act. Such organization shall: (1)
29 Provide the staffing, institutional expertise and board governance to
30 operate the State Civic Network in a nonpartisan and independent
31 manner; (2) establish, maintain and revise as necessary operating
32 agreements with each branch of government; (3) maintain the State
33 Civic Network's operational and editorial independence in a manner
34 consistent with the provisions of such operating agreements; (4)
35 establish, maintain and revise as necessary carriage distribution and
36 retransmission agreements with appropriate video programming
37 services, including, but not limited to, cable television direct broadcast
38 satellite and broadband video; and (5) provide, operate and maintain
39 all equipment and infrastructure needed for the programming,
40 engineering and distribution of State Civic Network programming.

41 (c) Each community antenna television company and each
42 multichannel video programming distributor shall include the State
43 Civic Network in its basic service package.

44 (d) As used in this section, "multichannel video programming
45 distributor" means a multichannel video programming distributor, as
46 defined in 47 CFR 76.1300, as amended from time to time, and includes
47 an owner of an open video system, as defined in 47 CFR 76.1500, as
48 amended from time to time.

49 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2016*) (a) The Public Utilities
50 Regulatory Authority shall issue a request for proposals and
51 subsequently assign responsibility for managing the State Civic
52 Network established under section 2 of this act for a period of ten
53 years to a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization located in the state that
54 the authority determines to be the most qualified, based on the
55 following criteria: (1) The organization's performance and experience
56 in providing gavel-to-gavel coverage of state government proceedings;
57 (2) the operating plan and technology plan submitted by the
58 organization for providing coverage of state government proceedings;
59 (3) the organization's proposed budget, including expenses for salaries,
60 consultants, attorneys and other professionals; (4) the quality and
61 quantity of the programming to be created, promoted, facilitated or
62 continued by the organization; (5) the organization's procedures to
63 ensure compliance with federal and state law, including the
64 regulations of Connecticut state agencies; and (6) any other criteria
65 determined to be relevant by the authority. At the conclusion of the
66 initial ten-year term, and every ten years thereafter, the authority shall
67 hold a hearing, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 of the
68 general statutes, concerning the ability of the organization previously
69 selected to continue its responsibility for managing the State Civic
70 Network. In its decision following such a hearing, the authority may
71 assign the responsibility for management of the State Civic Network to
72 another organization or the previously selected organization in
73 accordance with the procedure set forth in this subsection.

74 (b) On or before July first of each year, the authority shall establish
75 the amount that the organization responsible for managing the State
76 Civic Network shall receive for such operations from customers of
77 community antenna television companies and multichannel video
78 programming distributors pursuant to section 4 of this act.

79 (c) If an organization assigned responsibility for managing the State
80 Civic Network ceases to provide such management, such organization
81 shall transfer its network-related assets to the successor organization

82 assigned such responsibility or, if no successor organization is
83 assigned such responsibility, to another nonprofit organization within
84 the state selected by the authority.

85 (d) All assets related to the operation of the State Civic Network that
86 are owned by the state of Connecticut on June 30, 2016, shall be
87 transferred to the organization assigned responsibility for managing
88 the State Civic Network not later than ninety days after the authority's
89 issuance of a decision under subsection (a) of this section.

90 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2016*) (a) On July 1, 2016, and on or
91 before July first of each year thereafter, the Public Utilities Regulatory
92 Authority shall establish the amount that the organization assigned
93 responsibility for managing the State Civic Network will receive for its
94 operations under sections 2 and 3 of this act from each customer of a
95 community antenna television company and multichannel video
96 programming distributor, to be used by such managing organization
97 for the purposes set forth in subsection (b) of this section. Each such
98 company or distributor shall include such amount as a rate adjustment
99 on customer bills.

100 (b) The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority may adjust the amount
101 annually, except the authority may increase or decrease the amount by
102 not more than ten per cent of said amount for the subscribers of
103 community antenna television companies and multichannel video
104 programming distributors within a franchise area after considering (1)
105 the criteria set forth in subsection (a) of section 3 of this act, (2) the
106 level of state government need for coverage of state government
107 proceedings, (3) the level of community need for coverage of state
108 government proceedings, (4) the adequacy of existing facilities and
109 equipment to meet the current and future needs of the State Civic
110 Network, and (5) any other factors determined to be relevant by the
111 authority. Prior to increasing or decreasing said amount, the authority
112 shall give notice and opportunity for a hearing to the community
113 antenna television company or multichannel video programming

114 distributor and, where applicable, the organization managing the State
115 Civic Network.

116 (c) When the authority issues, transfers or renews a certificate of
117 public convenience and necessity to operate a community antenna
118 television system, the authority shall include in the franchise
119 agreement the amount that the organization responsible for managing
120 the State Civic Network shall receive for such operations from
121 subscribers. The authority shall conduct a proceeding to establish the
122 amount that the organization responsible for managing the State Civic
123 Network shall receive for such operations from multichannel video
124 programming distributors and the method of payment of said amount.

125 (d) Each community antenna television company and multichannel
126 video programming distributor shall transmit the funds collected
127 pursuant to subsection (a) of this section on a quarterly basis to the
128 State Civic Network for the operation of said network, which
129 operations shall include, but need not be limited to: (1) Purchasing and
130 installing equipment and infrastructure; (2) staffing and operating a
131 cable television channel and Internet web site to provide coverage of
132 state government and civic affairs; and (3) any operations of the State
133 Civic Network. The balance of any such funds remaining at the end of
134 any fiscal year shall be carried forward in the fiscal year next
135 succeeding.

136 (e) The authority shall adopt regulations, in accordance with chapter
137 54 of the general statutes, to implement the provisions of this section.

138 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2016*) (a) There is established a State
139 Civic Network Advisory Council. The council shall consist of the
140 following members: (1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of
141 Representatives; (2) one appointed by the president pro tempore of the
142 Senate; (3) one appointed by the minority leader of the House of
143 Representatives; (4) one appointed by the minority leader of the
144 Senate; (5) four appointed by the Governor; and (6) four appointed by

145 the Chief Justice of the Connecticut Supreme Court.

146 (b) All initial appointments to the council shall be made not later
147 than September 1, 2016, and shall terminate on June 30, 2017, June 30,
148 2018, June 30, 2019, and June 30, 2020, respectively, as set forth in
149 subsection (d) of this section, regardless of when the initial
150 appointment was made.

151 (c) The Governor shall select the chairperson of the council from
152 among the members of the council. Such chairperson shall schedule
153 the first meeting of the council. The council shall meet at least twice a
154 year.

155 (d) Appointed members of the council shall serve for four-year
156 terms which shall commence on July first in the year of the
157 appointment, except as provided in subsection (b) of this section and
158 except that members first appointed shall have the following terms: (1)
159 One member appointed by the Governor, one member appointed by
160 the Chief Justice and the member appointed by the minority leader of
161 the House of Representatives shall initially serve a term of one year; (2)
162 one member appointed by the Governor, one member appointed by
163 the Chief Justice and the member appointed by the minority leader of
164 the Senate shall initially serve a term of two years; (3) one member
165 appointed by the Governor, one member appointed by the Chief
166 Justice and the member appointed by the speaker of the House of
167 Representatives shall initially serve a term of three years; and (4) one
168 member appointed by the Governor, one member appointed by the
169 Chief Justice and the member appointed by the president pro tempore
170 of the Senate shall initially serve a term of four years. Members shall
171 continue to serve until their successors are appointed.

172 (e) Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority. Any
173 vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled for
174 the balance of the unexpired term.

175 (f) The members of the council shall serve without compensation.

176 (g) The council shall have the following powers and duties: (1) To
177 serve as a liaison between the nonprofit organization responsible for
178 managing the State Civic Network and the executive, judicial and
179 legislative branches; (2) to obtain from any executive, judicial or
180 legislative department, board, commission or other agency of the state
181 such assistance and data as necessary and available to carry out the
182 purposes of this section; (3) to accept any gift, donation or bequest for
183 the purpose of performing the duties described in this section; and (4)
184 to perform such other acts as may be necessary and appropriate to
185 carry out the duties described in this section.

186 Sec. 6. Subsection (i) of section 16-331 of the general statutes is
187 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
188 *1, 2016*):

189 (i) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (b) and (d) of this
190 section, the authority shall not renew a franchise for a term of more
191 than five years if the authority determines that the person, association
192 or corporation, during the term of the prior franchise, has substantially
193 failed to (1) deal effectively with consumer requests, complaints and
194 billing or service questions and disputes; (2) provide quality and
195 diversity of programming; (3) maintain fair and reasonable rates for
196 basic and extended basic service, and associated equipment, taking
197 into consideration the quality of service and programming provided to
198 consumers; (4) provide quality community access programming,
199 including public access, educational access, governmental access
200 programming and the [Connecticut Television] State Civic Network or
201 its successor; or (5) meet commitments for service extension to
202 customers within the franchise area. Nothing in this subsection shall
203 authorize the authority to set specific rates for service or associated
204 equipment.

205 Sec. 7. Subsection (g) of section 16-331cc of the general statutes is
206 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
207 *1, 2016*):

208 (g) When the balance of said account reaches more than one
 209 hundred fifty thousand dollars, the authority shall make a one-time
 210 transfer of one hundred fifty thousand dollars to the Office of
 211 Legislative Management for expenses related to the allowance of
 212 interconnection of the [Connecticut Television] State Civic Network
 213 with a certified competitive video service provider, as defined in
 214 section 16-1, as amended by this act, for the purpose of making the
 215 [Connecticut Television] State Civic Network available to such
 216 provider's customers.

217 Sec. 8. Section 2-71x of the general statutes is repealed. (*Effective July*
 218 *1, 2016*)

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2016</i>	16-1(a)(45)
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2016</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2016</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2016</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2016</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2016</i>	16-331(i)
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2016</i>	16-331cc(g)
Sec. 8	<i>July 1, 2016</i>	Repealer section

Statement of Purpose:

To establish a State Civic Network to provide television and Internet coverage of legislative, executive and judicial proceedings.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]