

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

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Since 2005, at least 18 states have enacted legislation removing authority from municipalities to grant franchises for cable TV service in favor of licensing by a state agency, relieving companies seeking to provide cable service from the necessity of negotiating agreements with each city they wish to serve. Impetus for the change has come from telephone companies which have begun to offer cable service over the past few years.

The impact of this change on cable TV competition, rates, and the provision of public, educational and governmental programming is unclear. House File 2351 requires the Department of Commerce to contract for a study in at least three states that have passed such legislation to measure the impact of state-level franchising on these variables. The study is to be submitted to the legislature by February 1, 2009 .