

As a parcel owner, I oppose all elements of HB 2654 (2021). This bill seeks to change terms of a duly executed agreement between two parties (an easement). This bill intends to remove property rights from land owners, puts a financial burden on the property owner to file an action, get an appraisal, and hire an attorney, to prevent such services, that could include trenching and other underground work, even if the original easement does not permit such use. The bill further assumes that the forms of notice provided for in the bill are sufficient enough and automatically removes any land owner rights within 18 months after issuance of a notice without any confirmation that the property owner received such notice. The bill puts all the burden on the property owner. Further, it allows a court or a jury to assess documentation that may or may not show decrease of value of the property, but the bill does not mention if that court or jury will have professional appraisal knowledge of reading and interpreting such documents, including property assessments or fair market values. For those of us property owners that provide access via their driveway to the utility easement, this could also alter access to our own home and livability, basically without our consent and causing an expense in an effort to stop the work. I would love broadband services as much as the next house. However, I am opposed to the manner in which this bill proposes to provide such services. This bill might provide installation of broadband services for those that would benefit the most, but does not consider the financial burden this might be for a property owner who wants to protest for whatever reason, but cannot because of financial reasons. This is breaking a homeowner's front door down without even knocking first. I do not know the barriers of which broadband providers experience in attempting to provide such services in other areas, but this is not the way. Please do not pass this.