

February 1, 2022

Mr. Jeffrey R. Gaudiosi
Executive Secretary
CT Public Utilities Regulatory Authority
10 Franklin Square
New Britain, CT 06051

Dear Mr. Gaudiosi,

The Cox Cable Manchester Advisory Council learned this week that the advisory council was not properly noticed about the proposed Cox Cable price increase slated for February 3, 2022.

After hearing concerns from a subscriber on January 26th, 2022 the Manchester franchise Advisory Council reached out to our Cox Cable representative seeking a notice of pricing increases. No information on the pricing increase could be found in any filing on the PURA website. The Advisory Council finally received a copy of the filing by e-mail from the Cox representative on January 31st, 2022.

Below is Section 16-333f of the Connecticut General Statutes, with the noticing requirements and public hearing obligation emphasized in underline.

"Sec. 16-333f. Programming and rate changes. Regulatory authority. Industry cooperation. (a) Each community antenna television company shall inform the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority, each subscriber, the chairpersons of the joint standing committee having cognizance of matters relating to public utilities and the chairperson of the company's advisory council of any planned programming or rate changes not less than thirty days unless otherwise required by federal law prior to implementing such changes unless (1) such changes are required by law to be made in less than thirty days, or (2) the authority prescribes a longer or shorter notice period in appropriate circumstances where such longer or shorter notice period is in the best interest of the company's subscribers. The company's advisory council may hold an advisory public hearing concerning the planned changes and may then make a recommendation to the company prior to the planned implementation date. The authority shall adopt regulations in accordance with chapter 54 to carry out the purposes of this subsection."

The rate change was not provided to the chairpersons of any of the company's three advisory councils and should be delayed until 30 days after January 31st, 2022. Any rate increase between January 31st, 2022 and March 2nd, 2022 should not be allowed since the statutory noticing requirements were not fulfilled.

Failure to properly notice the advisory councils has removed the advisory councils' ability to properly notice and hold a statutorily authorized public hearing. Subscribers were not given their opportunity to provide feedback to the advisory councils and the cable provider. In previous years, comments have been collected and feedback provided to the cable provider (see attached 2021 Memo to Cox Cable).

A subscriber that uses "Paperless Billing" would not be aware of the price increase. The Bill Summary page on the Cox website does not include the notice of price changes. That price change information is only visible if a subscriber downloads a PDF view of their January statement. Now more than ever, the statutory notice to the advisory councils and our timely outreach to the subscriber community is vital to subscriber education.

We request that PURA orders a delay of the price change until 30 days after the proper noticing to the advisory councils per the requirements of the CT General Statutes. If that is not feasible, we ask that subscribers are credited the price change difference for the February 3rd to March 2nd on a future bill.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Prause', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Eric Prause
Chair, Cox Cable Advisory Council, Manchester Franchise
PO Box 1146, Manchester, CT 06045
erprause@gmail.com

Copy: Office of Consumer Counsel
Peter Talbot, Cox Communication
Cox Cable Advisory Council, Enfield Franchise
Cox Cable Advisory Council, Meriden Franchise

Attached: 2021 "CCAC Rate Change Public Hearing Response"

Attached is the 2021 Rate Change Public Hearing
Feedback and Recommendation to Cox Communication

Cox Cable Advisory Council
Manchester, CT Franchise

February 2, 2021

Peter Talbot, Cox Government Relations

Dear Mr. Talbot,

The Cox Cable Advisory Council received the letter dated January 4th, 2020 regarding the proposed 2021 rate changes for video services effective February 4th, 2021. Pursuant to Section 16-331v of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Cox Cable Advisory Council representing the Manchester Franchise area held a statutory public hearing on January 28th.

The Advisory Council received comments from the public regarding the rate change. Attached is the written testimony submitted for the public hearing. Below is a summary of the comments:

- It was inappropriate to be “contemplating a rate increase during a global pandemic, when many people are struggling.”
- It is “not the time to increase rate” when people are “struggling to make ends meet.”
- The company should “focus on efficiency instead passing cost onto consumers.”
- Others “recommend that this increase...be postponed until such time when life seems more normal.”
- “In this economy, give us a break or keep as they are”
- Cox should “Freeze or lower” the pricing scale.

The Advisory Council is concerned about the rate increase on the lower tiers and while simultaneously reducing rates on upper tier services. **The Council is very concerned that the lowest tier is seeing a 20% rate increase while upper tier services are seeing a decrease.** Raising rates for the basic or lower tiers packages are more likely to impact the elderly and those on a fixed income and is not appropriate at this time.

Subscribers to higher video service tiers are more likely to afford to rate increases. Subscribers to lower tiers see video services as a utility and their cable subscription may be their lifeline to the world. Lower tier subscribers are more likely to be struggling to make ends meet and less likely to have alternate opportunities to receive video service (via Internet or satellite). Elderly and fixed income subscribers will need to pay this increase as part of their cable-phone bundle rate to keep home phones.

Based on the public input and our own discussion, the Council recommends that this rate change be postponed until the pandemic resides. The Council believes the increase, up to 20%, on the lower video service tiers is not appropriate at this time.

The Council further recommends that Cox reconsiders any future rate change structures. **Instead of decreasing upper tier rates while increasing the lower tier rates, all the rates should be kept the same.** If an overall rate increase is needed, it should be applied to higher tier and premium programming or as an equal percentage across all tiers.

Thank you,



Eric Prause
Chair, Cox Cable Advisory Council, Manchester Franchise

Cc: Manchester Franchise Mayors, Enfield and Cheshire Franchise Advisory Councils, Mr. Gaudiosi PURA

Cox Cable Advisory Council
Manchester, CT Franchise

Public Comment 1

Form Submission	
<u>Field</u>	<u>Value</u>
IP	72.200.133.253
Date Time	2021-01-26 20:34:44
First Name:	Brandon
Last Name:	LaGrange
E-mail:	Blagrange@gmail.com
Town:	South Windsor
Your Message:	<p>Being a new customer I've had to call numerous times for the same issues almost every single time.</p> <p>Service is spotty fluctuating non-stop during the day.</p> <p>I think Cox should instead focus on efficiency rather than passing costs onto customers.</p> <p>Comcast was a vastly different experience and I called a handful of times over ten years. In contrast I've called Cox ten times and it hasn't even been a year.</p>

Cox Cable Advisory Council
Manchester, CT Franchise

Public Comment 2

Form Submission	
<u>Field</u>	<u>Value</u>
IP	72.221.98.240
Date Time	2021-01-13 22:51:39
First Name:	Susan
Last Name:	Manser
E-mail:	samanser131@gmail.com
Town:	Manchester
Your Message:	Please - your prices are high and in this economy when so many of us are still with you - give us a break or keep as they are. Please do not raise the rates at this time. Please and Thank You.

Cox Cable Advisory Council
Manchester, CT Franchise

Public Comment 3

Form Submission	
<u>Field</u>	<u>Value</u>
IP	73.100.148.25
Date Time	2021-01-27 08:30:28
First Name:	Sharon
Last Name:	Mayock
E-mail:	Smayock8@gmail.com
Town:	Bolton
Your Message:	We are already paying through the nose for cable! Please, please stop this monopoly and either freeze or lower the cable rates! We really do pay too much and no one is happy about it!

Cox Cable Advisory Council
Manchester, CT Franchise

Public Comment 4

Form Submission	
Field	Value
IP	72.195.142.140
Date Time	2021-01-27 08:42:17
First Name:	Bob
Last Name:	Benson
E-mail:	Bubbamunson15@icloud.com
Town:	South Windsor
Your Message:	<p>Big Companies like Cox Cable have taken advantage of the pandemic. This is NOT a time to increase any rates. People are struggling to make ends meet, kids are using more data with distance learning, parents are teleworking. The cap on data that began in July has forced customers to pay overages or increase plans. More increases are forcing long term customers to seriously search for WiFi and television alternatives!</p>

Cox Cable Advisory Council
Manchester, CT Franchise

Public Comment 5

to me ▼

Dear members of the Cox Cable Advisory Council,

Thank you for your service on the council and for holding a public hearing. Although I am a subscriber of Cox's Internet service, I no longer subscribe to their Cable TV service and am not directly impacted by the proposed increase. However, I do have concerns about any service provider contemplating a rate increase during a global pandemic, when many people are struggling through possibly the worst time of their life. A \$5.00 increase may seem really inconsequential to a company the size of Cox Communications, but it is real money to a lot of people, especially now. I urge the council to recommend that this increase and others that may be in consideration be postponed until such time when life seems more normal.

Sincerely,

Margaret Hackett
144 Haystack Road
Manchester, CT 06040

Cox Cable Advisory Council
Manchester, CT Franchise

Notice from Cox, Received Jan 4, 2020 (Page 1 of 2)



January 4, 2020

Mr. Jeffrey R. Gaudiosi
Executive Secretary
CT Public Utilities Regulatory Authority
10 Franklin Square
New Britain, CT 06051

Dear Mr. Gaudiosi,

We wanted to let you know that effective February 4, 2021 we are increasing the rates of some of our video services to reflect the increased costs of doing business, particularly the rising costs of TV programming. We began communications to our customers 30 days prior to the increase, via bill message

We don't make this decision lightly as we know that any bill increase can have an impact. With that in mind, we remain strongly committed to helping our customers however we can during these unprecedented times.

Listed below is a list of our upcoming price changes.

Service	2020 Price	Effective 12/3/2020	Change
Contour Flex Starter	\$25.00	\$30.00	+\$5.00
TV Economy	\$42.00	\$47.00	+\$5.00
TV Essential	\$85.49	\$90.00	+\$4.51
Contour TV (Advanced)	\$90.49	\$95.00	+\$4.51
Contour TV Ultimate	\$170.49	\$168.50	-\$(\$1.99)
Grandfathered TV			
Contour Flex Economy	\$42.00	\$47.00	+\$5.00
TV Economy Plus	\$49.99	\$56.00	+\$6.01
Contour TV Preferred	\$102.49	\$107.00	+\$4.51
AdvTV / Contour TV Premier	\$114.49	\$119.00	+\$4.51
AdvTV Ult (ADTVULT)	\$164.98	\$162.99	-\$(\$1.99)
AdvTV Ult w/ 4 Prem (ADTVULT4)	\$173.98	\$171.99	-\$(\$1.99)
AdvTV Ult w/ R6 DVR (ADTVULT6)	\$172.49	\$170.50	-\$(\$1.99)
CTV Ult w/ R6 DVR (CONTOURULT)	\$172.49	\$170.50	-\$(\$1.99)
CTV Ultimate (CONTOURULT2)	\$170.49	\$168.50	-\$(\$1.99)
Grandfathered Hispanic TV Packages			
Super Mix	\$100.49	\$105.00	+\$4.51
Contour Flex Starter Latino	\$35.00	\$40.00	+\$5.00
Contour Flex Economy Latino	\$52.00	\$57.00	+\$5.00
Contour TV Latino	\$100.49	\$105.00	+\$4.51
Contour TV Latino Preferred	\$112.49	\$117.00	+\$4.51
Contour TV Latino Ultimate	\$182.49	\$187.01	+\$4.52
DVR Service			
Starter DVR Service (R1)	\$4.99	\$5.00	+\$0.01
Essential DVR Service (R2)	\$12.99	\$13.50	+\$0.51
Preferred DVR Service (R6)	\$19.99	\$20.00	+\$0.01
Ultimate DVR Service (R24)	\$29.99	\$30.00	+\$0.01
Surcharges			
Broadcast Surcharge	\$13.50	\$16.00	+\$2.50
Regional Sports Surcharge	\$10.00	\$11.00	+\$1.00

Cox Cable Advisory Council
Manchester, CT Franchise

Notice from Cox, Received Jan 4, 2020 (Page 2 of 2)

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach me at (860) 250-9867 or peter.talbot@cox.com.

Sincerely,

Peter J. Talbot
Cox Communications