

Briefs: Georgia limits broadband regulation

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The Georgia Legislature has passed a bill barring the Public Service Commission from regulating broadband and wireless communications.

The measure, which now goes to the desk of the governor to be signed, was championed by BellSouth and other telcos that insist unfettered markets would allow continued expansion.

"The purpose of this bill is to protect and foster economic development in the emerging communication technologies of broadband, wireless and Voice over Internet Protocol," said House Telecommunications Committee Chairman Jeff Lewis. "It is to protect it from unnecessary and quite possibly detrimental regulation."

The Atlanta Journal Constitution said consumer advocates and other critics questioned the wisdom of removing the PSC from such a rapidly evolving arena.

The bill retains the PSC's authority to field consumer complaints; however, BellSouth officials told the newspaper that keeping the agency largely out of the picture would improve Georgia's telecom investment climate.

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