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**Fierce Video
DirecTV raising
prices but lowering**

With the clock expiring Wednesday on its \$8.4 billion offer to buy Cogeco, Altice USA has tapped out. In September, Altice USA first offered to buy Cogeco (CGO) and Cogeco Communications from Rogers Communications,

cost of Starz and Showtime

which owns a 41% share in the former and 33% of the latter, and members of the Audet family that own Cogeco.

Washington Post Biden and top Democrats are laying the groundwork for a multibillion-dollar push to boost U.S. broadband

Under the terms of that complex deal proposed by Altice USA, it would have taken control of Atlantic Broadband, which Cogeco bought from Arby Partners for \$1.36 billion in 2012, and then in a separate deal, sell-off the remaining Canadian Cogeco assets to Rogers Communications. Rogers is Cogeco's largest long-term shareholder.

Hollywood Reporter How Joe Biden May Reshape the FCC

The Audet family spurned that offer, and a subsequent, better offer that was made last month. Gestion Audem, which is the company controlled by members of the Audet family that holds 69% of all voting rights of Cogeco, rejected the offers. Louis Audet is the president of Gestion Audem.

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Court strikes down counting of 2,349 ballots in Allegheny County

The Audet family was firm in its refusal to sell, and has said its focused on building out services within its own footprint. Last month, Cogeco Connexion, a subsidiary of Cogeco, it was buying DERYtelecom for \$405 million. Both Cogeco and DERYtelecom are based in the province of Quebec, which meant DERYtelecom's network assets were a good fit for Cogeco.

Pennlive After a year of political fights, a Pennsylvania state budget is closing with minimal fuss. Really.

Rogers and Altice both said they're no longer interested in pursuing a deal for Cogeco. "We're disappointed that we didn't get the ability to engage with either the Audet family or the Cogeco boards on what is a terrific offer, a highly valued offer," Rogers CEO Joe Natale said Wednesday at an industry conference, according to a story [by Bloomberg](#).

Natale also said Rogers wouldn't rule out expanding its operations in Quebec, where it has done business for 35 years. [Rogers previously said](#) it would invest \$3 billion (Canadian) in Quebec's telecom networks if its attempt to take over Cogeco was successful.

Allentown Morning Call Divided Pennsylvania House approves audit of 2020 election, citing inconsistencies and confusion in electorate

After Wednesday's deadline passed, Altice USA stuck a fork into its attempts to buy and divide up Cogeco with Rogers. "Our offer to acquire Cogeco in order to own Atlantic Broadband has expired and we do not intend to extend it," said Altice USA in a statement. "We remain committed to our growth strategy and continue to focus on opportunities to drive value for our shareholders." – **Fierce Telecom**

USA Today Trump asks judge to throw out questioned ballots or the entire election in Pennsylvania

When the pandemic sent everyone home, small broadband providers went to work, "leaning in" said Patricia Boyers, president of Boycom Vision, a small Missouri provider, to keep their people connected.

Reuters Why Republican voters say there's 'no way in hell' Trump lost

Boyers, who is also chairman of ACA Connects, talked about the challenges and triumphs of smaller cable broadband providers during an interview for C-SPAN's Communicators series. She was joined by ACA Connects president Matt Polka, who echoed her sentiments, calling what his members had done a "great untold story."

Boyers suggested Washington had not necessarily made the job easier, citing the many hoops her company has to jump through. Asked whether she found that Washington got in her way, she said: "Oh my gosh, how much time you got." She said that she has office space just for dealing with the IRS and all the public service commissions and the FCC. "Every time you turn around, somebody wants a piece of something. There's regulatory, there's EPA, there's the Department of National Resources. She did say she considered the current FCC "an ally," but past ones "not so much."

Polka, whose job it is to educate Washington about how regulation and legislation and policies impact smaller operators without the money and staff of the Comcast's and Charters of the world, framed it somewhat differently. He said that ACAC was working "hand in hand" with Washington on "sensible laws and regulations" that allowed them to invest and deploy. He said Boyers was making the point that there is a difference between serving densely populated areas and rural ones, many of them, like Boyers', "perpetually impoverished

according to federal standards." He said those were remote places that were hard to serve, but cost the same or more to build as urban areas. He said ACAC was with Washington "in lockstep" on serving rural areas, but that policymakers have to understand the different challenges they face.

Boyers said that one thing she learned during the pandemic was how to keep her employees safe by keeping them in their own "bubbles," whether it was doing drops thought windows or putting modems on porches and walking subs through self-installs or getting a donation of PPE equipment from a laboratory so they could get fiber to the home when their CEO had to start working from home.

She also pointed out that she and her husband raised black angus beef cattle on the side to subsidize their small business in the early years, which wound up coming in handy. She said when ground beef became scarce, they slaughtered some of the cows to donate the ground beef to their employees. She said those were some of the ways they had "rolled their sleeves up."

Asked about the strain of the pandemic, and the use of Zoom, on her business, Boyers did not talk about it in terms of capacity, but as a personal tool for leveling the playing field in Washington. "Zoom is a great equalizer. It has allowed us to get into the offices of legislators. "If you are looking at this screen [the C-SPAN interview was a virtual one] my face is the same size as your face and Matt's face. Now if you go on the Hill in person, that old boy from Charter in front of me [one of the largest MVPDS vs. Boyer's 4,258 subs], he fills up the doorway a lot bigger than I do."

Polka stepped in to answer the underlying question about capacity. He said that as the pandemic was starting there was the underlying question of whether networks could handle the capacity of all that stay-at-home communicating and the initial "incredible surge" in demand.

He said the answer was that because of the ability of his members to invest in and deploy plant over the past four years to use new and alternative technologies, they were preparing to meet the pandemic before they even knew there would be one. He said that it turned out because of that there was capacity to spare. "Our members were ready to meet that need and continue to do so."

Polka said he thought Zoom would become part of the new normal as people prepared to move slowly back to offices, or perhaps not return. Asked what the impact of the pandemic had been on cord-cutting, Polka said that streaming is more popular than ever and cord cutting was certainly an issue, driven by a lot of factors, including the higher cost of retransmission consent which drives cable prices higher and more customers to streaming options. But he said the good news was that a company even like Patty's can give consumers those new over-the-top services as well as traditional cable or a mix of both.

Asked if cable is still a 21st century technology, Boyers said yes "in my neck of the woods." She said that while people have talked about the pandemic putting everyone in the same boat, that was not really the case. "We were all in the same storm, but in a bunch of different little boats." She said her "boat" is different from the technology side than folks on the East and West coasts and even the metropolitan areas of the Midwest."

She said she still has subs who are elderly and impoverished and don't even have the money to pay for over-the-top services. So, yes, she said, the linear cable TV product is still viable for her subs. She said cord-cutting had slowed as the uncertainty of incomes increased. Boyers said affordability is another challenge in the digital divide.

"The Communicators" interview will air Saturday, Nov. 21, at 6:30 p.m. ET on C-SPAN, and on Monday, Nov. 23, on C-SPAN2 at 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. ET.

– **Next TV**

With [some top spots already announced](#), Joe Biden's maneuvers are prompting all sorts of speculation about which tri-state locals might be heading to Washington for new jobs. One of the country's most prominent — secretary of state — could go to a leading Biden ally a state over in Delaware, Sen. Chris Coons. Coons [has signaled his interest](#), though he declined an interview. "He would love to do it," a person with knowledge of Coons' feelings on the post said. "And it is certainly fair to say he is under consideration."

Coons, a Democrat in the Senate seat Biden held for 36 years, was a lead surrogate for Biden during the presidential campaign. During the virtual Democratic National Convention, Coons nominated Biden on behalf of his home state. Coons serves on the Foreign Relations Committee and has a relatively good relationship with Republicans, which could make getting Senate approval easier.

Another name circulating is David L. Cohen, whose fund-raising for Biden and background in local, state, and national politics could make him a contender for a post or ambassadorship. Cohen did not respond to a request for comment.

Clout hears former Rep. Patrick Murphy, an Iraq War veteran who [served as acting secretary of the Army](#) in 2016, is under consideration for that post again or for secretary for Veteran Affairs. Murphy, who declined to comment, [campaigned with Biden in Bucks County](#) in the closing days of the campaign. Biden, speaking of the sacrifices made by U.S. military members, [told the crowd](#), "Nobody knows that more than Patrick."

Some are passing on consideration to keep their day jobs. Sen. Bob Casey, Biden's closest ally in Pennsylvania, said he wants to remain in the Senate. "I love being in the Senate," Casey told Clout. "If he wants me to do something, I'd be honored to talk to him about it, but I made it pretty clear, pretty early I want to help him in the Senate."

Rep. Brendan Boyle, [whose father immigrated to America](#) from County Donegal in Ireland, campaigned with Biden on the Sunday before the election. "We owe Brendan," Biden [told the crowd that day](#), noting that Boyle was the first member of the U.S. House to endorse him. The job of ambassador to Ireland is a popular post in any administration. But Clout hears Boyle, who just won a fourth term, likes serving on the Ways and Means Committee and is unlikely to leave his seat.

Clout can confirm one appointment — former Rep. Bob Brady has accepted the position of Friend of Joe . Brady, chairman of the Democratic Party in Philadelphia, describes the post as a plenipotentiary ambassador-arbitrator on call to help Biden in labor disputes. Biden, in [a national video message](#) to supporters this week, described longtime allies who stuck with him as "a lot of Bobby Bradys out there." "That's the only title I want," Brady told Clout.

Clout continues to be fascinated by the second act of former Lt. Gov. Mike Stack III. Last we heard, the Northeast Philly Democrat was out in Los Angeles [working on stand-up comedy](#) with the stage name Mikey Stacks and [trying to get his acting career going](#). Now he's trying to save Stonehenge, [the prehistoric stone monument](#) in southern England. Clout fans alerted us [to social media posts](#) of a two-minute [public service announcement](#) Stack recorded, decrying [a controversial plan to build a tunnel](#) near Stonehenge to reduce traffic noise from a nearby highway.

"The U.K. government will be in direct violation of international treaties to protect major archaeological sites," Stack said in the video. "We are people from across the world. We stand up for humanity and our heritage." Stack, [who urged viewers to sign a petition](#) advocating cancellation of the tunnel, did not respond to a request for comment. Clout found examples of other aspiring actors recording similar videos, perhaps to bolster their "demo reels" for casting agents.

"I've been saying since Wednesday morning that Biden would win. And to my friends out there in WHP-580 listening audience and on Facebook and on Twitter, in my opinion there really are no bombshells that are about to drop that will derail a Biden presidency, including these lawsuits." — Republican attorney Marc Scaringi, speaking on the Saturday after the general election [on his Harrisburg radio show](#).

"This simple exercise will determine whether Plaintiffs can prove their case – that sufficient illegal ballots were counted that changed the result of the election. If so, the Court should set aside these votes and declare Trump the winner." — Scaringi, in [a federal court filing Wednesday](#) with former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, informing a judge they intend to use "statistical expert analysis" to locate alleged voter fraud. His proposed solution would toss out the votes of [more than 6.8 million Pennsylvanians](#). — **Chris Brennan's "Clout" column in *Philadelphia Daily News***

