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Tennessee lawmakers have defeated a proposal to expand municipal broadband, with one state representative accusing fellow elected officials of caving to pressure from lobbyists. "It's a testament to the power of lobbying against this bill and not listening to our electorate," Rep. Kevin Brooks (R-Cleveland) told reporters after the vote, according to a *Times Free Press* [article yesterday](#).

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Comcast has also previously tried to prevent expansion of municipal broadband in Tennessee, having [sued](#) the Electric Power Board (EPB) of Chattanooga in 2008 to prevent it from building a fiber network. Comcast lost the suit, and EPB built its network.

EPB has been at the center of the most recent efforts to expand municipal broadband in the state. The utility petitioned the Federal Communications Commission to preempt a state law that prevents it from expanding outside its electric service area to adjacent towns that have poor Internet service, and the [FCC agreed to do so](#) despite opposition from state officials and AT&T. [Tennessee sued the FCC](#) to preserve its law that limits city-run broadband networks, and oral arguments in the case are [scheduled](#) to be heard Thursday.

Not content to wait for the legal process to play out, Brooks and Gardenhire were pushing legislation that would remove the state-level restriction that prevents broadband-providing electric utilities from expanding outside their electric service area. But the proposal—and even an amendment that would have scaled it back to include

Brooks didn't name lobbyists for any specific companies but said, "I heard they hired 27 lawyers to fight." Sen. Todd Gardenhire (R-Chattanooga) last month [blamed AT&T](#) for leading efforts to kill the bill. "We're talking about AT&T," Gardenhire said at the time. "They're the most powerful lobbying organization in this state by far."

AT&T publicly opposed the bill, saying that "taxpayer money should not be used to over-build or compete with the private sector." Tennessee House Speaker Beth Harwell (R-Nashville) has [said](#) she prefers "that the private sector take this over."

[override Wolf veto](#)

[Washington Post](#)  
[Donald Trump just singlehandedly shut down Monday's Fox News debate](#)

just a pilot project involving EPB—failed Tuesday in a 5-3 vote by the state House Business and Utilities Subcommittee. "On Tuesday at the state Capitol in Nashville, a platoon of lobbyists and executives, including AT&T Tennessee President Joelle Phillips, were present in the House hearing room or watching on a video screen as Brooks presented the bill and the amendment," the *Times Free Press* article said. Despite defeat in the current legislative session, proponents of expanding municipal broadband "vowed to return in 2017."

UPDATE: Comcast told Ars that it did not take a formal position on this bill or other similar ones in Tennessee "and does not lobby their passage or defeat." But Comcast clearly thinks the bill was a bad idea. "We have provided information on our investment and broadband infrastructure in Tennessee, and the factual experiences of municipal broadband efforts in communities across the country (many of which have left communities saddled in debt, or like Provo, where the infrastructure was sold to Google [for \\$1](#) but the debt remains)," Comcast said. – *Ars Technica*

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SCTE and Comcast are partnering with Georgia Institute of Technology to recruit and train military veterans for careers as cable techs. The partnership is with Georgia Tech Professional Education's Veterans Education, Training and Transition program. Under the pilot training partnership, two initial groups of up to 20 veterans will be trained for cable telecommunications engineering careers.

According to a Society of Telecommunications Engineers (SCTE) announcement, Comcast will be the first to use the program to recruit and train potential engineering employees. "These highly motivated, talented participants will have the chance to explore exciting career paths in our industry, and we look forward to the opportunity to have them join our team," said Carol Eggert, VP of military and veteran affairs for Comcast, and a U.S. Army brigadier General.

Initial student screening is being handled by Georgia Tech, which is vetting service members residing in close proximity to Fort Gordon, Fort Stewart and Warner Robins Air Force Base. The program entails a seven-month process, whereby selected students embark on a "self-paced" online training course put together by the SCTE's International Society of Broadband Experts ISBE arm. Beginning in the second quarter of this year, students in the first class will complete ISBE online course certification for one of two tracks — field technician or headend technician.

Students who successfully complete their certifications will advance to a second phase that includes additional training from Georgia Tech's veterans program and Comcast internships. "Our military veterans represent a deep pool of highly skilled, well-trained talent that would be a tremendous asset to cable," said Mark Dzuban, president and CEO of SCTE/ISBE. "Our hat is off to Comcast for working with Georgia Tech Professional Education, the SCTE Foundation and SCTE/ISBE to show how the vast resources of our industry and its training partners can help these dedicated men and women transition their military training to new civilian careers. – *Fierce Installer*

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Be honest, do you pay for your own Netflix subscription, or mooch off someone else's?

A survey conducted by research firm Survata for Quartz found that 31% of Americans who have access to a Netflix subscription do not actually pay for it. Young people are, unsurprisingly, the biggest offenders: 69% of people aged 13 to 17 mooch off someone else's account, and 50% of 18- to 24-year-olds are moochers.

Survata surveyed 2,255 people in the US in January asking whether they paid for a Netflix subscription or "mooched" by using the account of a family member or friend. Netflix subscriptions allow for one other person to use the same password and login for \$8 a month; for \$12 up to four people can stream on one account simultaneously.

Sixty-nine percent of those surveyed said they pay for a Netflix account, 26% said they used a family member's, and 5% said they used the account of a friend. Survata also found that 37% of males mooch, while only 27% of females mooch.

Netflix, at least publicly, isn't concerned about account sharing. CEO Reed Hastings called it "a positive thing" at the Consumer Electronics Show in January. Hastings argued that many of the "moochers"—most of whom are young people—go on to become paying subscribers once they get older and have money of their own to spend. A recent report by Parks Associates estimated that the streaming video industry loses \$500 million a year to mooching. Netflix declined to comment.

HBO CEO Richard Plepler is similarly unconcerned about HBO Go moochers. He said last year that password sharing has no impact on HBO's business apart from being a "terrific marketing vehicle." What Hastings and Plepler are likely more worried about is the thriving online black market for streaming accounts, where stolen login credentials are sold at a discount. (Here's how to tell if and when someone used your Netflix account without you knowing.)

There isn't yet a clear etiquette for sharing passwords. Sharing within households is fine, and is, in fact, encouraged—Netflix offers a premium family plan that allows streaming on up to four screens at once. Sharing with your best friend or a partner is usually okay too. But what about your uncle? Your mother-in-law? Your buddy's buddy who really just wants to watch *Daredevil* and swears he won't use it again after that? – **Quartz**