STATE OF CONNECTICUT
PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY

October 8, 2026

PETITION FOR DECLARATORY RULING REGARDING THE STATUTORY AND REGULATORY OBLIGATIONS OF HOLDERS OF CERTIFICATES OF CABLE FRANCHISE AUTHORITY

The Cox/Charter Cable Advisory Council, Manchester Franchise ("Council"), through its Chair, respectfully petitions the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority ("PURA" or "Authority") for a declaratory ruling pursuant to CGS Section 4-176 and RCSA Section 16-1-113 and 16-1-114 concerning the relationship between the statutory provisions specifically applicable to holders of Certificates of Cable Franchise Authority ("CCFA") and otherwise applicable statutory and regulatory requirements governing community antenna television ("CATV") companies and public service companies.

The question is presented in the context of the programming and rate-change notice requirements applicable to CoxCom, LLC following Charter Communications, Inc.'s acquisition of Cox Communications, Inc., including the introduction of new Spectrum television offerings that Charter identifies as over-the-top ("OTT") services rather than Title VI cable services.

I. Questions Presented

The Council respectfully requests that PURA determine:

1. **Whether CGS Section 16-331v exclusively governs the programming and rate-change notice obligations of a CCFA holder, or whether CGS Section 16-333f and RCSA Sections 16-333f-1 through 16-333f-3 remain applicable pursuant to CGS Section 16-331z.**
2. **More generally, whether a statutory provision within CGS Sections 16-331q through 16-331aa addressing a particular subject supersedes otherwise applicable CATV or public service company statutes, regulations, and PURA orders addressing the same subject, or whether those obligations remain applicable unless the General Assembly has expressly provided otherwise.**
3. **What advance notice obligations applied to Charter/CoxCom's September 16 2026 introduction of Spectrum programming packages, pricing, equipment requirements, and associated charges in the legacy Cox service areas.**
4. **Whether and to what extent Charter's characterization of a newly introduced television offering as an OTT product, rather than a Title VI cable service,**

affects the applicability of Connecticut's programming and rate-change notice requirements, particularly where that offering is marketed to existing cable subscribers as an alternative to their current service.

II. Reason for Declaratory Ruling

The Council seeks a declaratory ruling because Charter and the Office of Consumer Counsel ("OCC") have previously expressed different interpretations of CGS Section16-331z concerning the continuing regulatory obligations of CCFA holders, and Charter is now relying upon its interpretation in a specific controversy involving the rights and responsibilities of subscribers and cable advisory councils.

This statutory interpretation issue arose during Docket No. 25-08-11, *Application of Charter Communications, Inc. for Approval of a Change of Control*.

In its December 22, 2025 brief in that proceeding, Charter asserted:

"As a general matter, CCFA holders are not subject to the rules governing public service companies and community antenna television companies if statutes that govern CCFA holders specify otherwise."

Charter further stated that where CCFA holders are subject to specific statutory requirements in a given subject area, Charter understands those requirements to supersede what it characterized as "legacy CATV company requirements governing the same topic."

OCC directly disputed that interpretation in Section IV of its January 8, 2026 Reply Brief. OCC characterized Charter's interpretation as a "fundamental mischaracterization" of CGS Section 16-331z.

OCC instead relied upon the language of Section 16-331z(a), which generally preserves obligations under laws, regulations, and PURA orders applicable to CATV companies or public service companies unless otherwise specified within the CCFA statutory provisions.

OCC concluded:

"Compliance with existing public service company and CATV statutes is the expectation, not the exception."

OCC further observed that it had been unable to identify a formal proceeding since 2008 in which Charter or Cox sought a declaratory ruling concerning the applicability of CATV company requirements to CCFA holders.

The Council is not asking PURA to adopt OCC's interpretation merely because OCC previously advanced it. The Council identifies these competing positions because the statutory disagreement raised in Docket No. 25-08-11 has now developed into a concrete controversy requiring regulatory certainty.

III. Present Controversy

On September 16, 2026, Charter/Spectrum provided the Council, PURA, other affected cable advisory councils, OCC, and legislative committee chairs with information concerning new Spectrum programming packages and pricing being introduced in the legacy Cox service areas.

The e-mail communication indicated that the new Spectrum products and pricing were effective immediately.

The Council subsequently submitted correspondence to PURA questioning whether implementation of the new programming and pricing structure complied with Connecticut's thirty-day advance-notice requirements.

The Council submitted supplemental correspondence after the Council Chair contacted Cox/Spectrum customer service while attempting to downgrade existing Cox television service. The representative advised that legacy Cox packages were no longer available and that the subscriber would instead need to select a Spectrum offering involving different programming options, equipment, functionality, and associated charges.

Charter subsequently acknowledged that the information provided by the customer service representative was incorrect and stated that legacy Cox customers remain eligible to retain and modify their existing Cox services.

On September 28, 2026, Charter submitted a response to the Council's filings.

In addition to disputing the factual basis for the Council's concerns, Charter raised the threshold statutory issue that is the subject of this petition.

Charter asserted that CGS Section 16-331v, rather than Section 16-333f and its implementing regulations, governs the notice obligations applicable to CoxCom because CoxCom holds a CCFA. Charter specifically cited its December 22, 2025 brief in Docket No. 25-08-11 in support of that position.

Charter also asserted that Section 16-331v(b) requires notice to subscribers and advisory councils only for a planned elimination or reduction in programming or a planned rate increase. Because Charter maintains that existing Cox subscribers may retain their existing

packages, rates, programming, and equipment, Charter contends that the introduction of the new Spectrum offerings did not trigger those notice requirements.

The disagreement previously presented to PURA concerning the proper interpretation of Section16-331z now has direct consequences for subscribers and advisory councils.

Subsequent Clarification Concerning Spectrum TV Lite and PEG Programming

In response to the September 16th programming e-mail from Charter, Alex Fraser, Chair of the Enfield Cable Advisory Council, raised concerns regarding the apparent absence of public, educational, and governmental ("PEG") channels from the new Spectrum TV Lite offering.

In response, Jennifer Young, Senior Director of State Government Affairs for Charter/Spectrum, provided the following clarification:

"After careful review, Spectrum TV Lite is not a Title VI cable service; rather, it is an over-the-top (OTT) product. As a result, PEG channels are not required to be carried as part of the TV Lite offering. PEG channels remain available as part of Spectrum's lowest-tier linear cable package, consistent with applicable requirements."

This exchange raises an additional question relevant to the present petition: how the introduction of new television offerings that Charter classifies as OTT services should be evaluated under Connecticut's programming and rate-change notice framework when those offerings are presented to existing cable subscribers as alternative service options.

The exchange illustrates how the regulatory classification of a newly introduced service can materially affect the programming available to subscribers and the regulatory obligations associated with that service.

It also provides a concrete example of the value of advisory council review. The question raised by the Enfield Council resulted in Charter clarifying the status of PEG programming.

IV. Relationship Among CGS Sections 16-331v, 16-331z, and 16-333f

Section 16-331v establishes programming and rate-change notice requirements specifically applicable to companies issued CCFAs.

Section 16-331v(a) requires a CCFA holder to inform PURA of "any planned programming or rate changes" not less than thirty days before implementing such changes, subject to statutory exceptions.

Section 16-331v(b) contains different language concerning notice to subscribers, legislative committee chairs, and advisory council chairs. That subsection applies to a

“planned elimination or reduction in programming or planned rate increases” and permits the advisory council to conduct an advisory public hearing and make a recommendation before the planned implementation date.

Section 16-333f and its implementing regulations establish additional requirements concerning notice of programming and rate changes by CATV companies.

The threshold question is not whether Section 16-331v applies to CoxCom. As a CCFA holder, CoxCom is subject to that section.

The question is whether Section 16-331v exclusively defines CoxCom’s obligations concerning programming and rate changes or whether otherwise applicable CATV requirements continue to operate alongside Section 16-331v pursuant to Section 16-331z.

Section 16-331z(a) generally preserves obligations under laws, regulations, and PURA orders applicable to CATV companies and public service companies unless otherwise specified in Sections 16-331q through 16-331aa.

Section 16-331z(b) expressly identifies particular statutory provisions and associated regulations and orders from which CCFA holders are exempt.

Section 16-333f is not among the provisions expressly identified in Section 16-331z(b).

Charter’s interpretation appears to be that the existence of a CCFA-specific statute addressing a particular regulatory subject is itself sufficient to supersede otherwise applicable CATV requirements addressing that subject.

OCC has previously argued that Section 16-331z produces the opposite result: existing CATV and public service company requirements remain applicable unless the legislature expressly provides otherwise.

The Council respectfully requests that PURA resolve this statutory question, including whether the more specific language of Section 16-331v limits or displaces the otherwise applicable notice requirements of Section 16-333f.

V. Importance of the Question Beyond the Present Dispute

Although the present controversy primarily involves programming and rate-change notice, the underlying question has broader regulatory significance.

If Charter’s interpretation is correct, the presence of a CCFA-specific statutory requirement concerning a particular subject may displace preexisting CATV or public service company requirements addressing that subject.

If OCC's interpretation is correct, otherwise applicable obligations continue unless the legislature has provided an applicable exemption.

This distinction affects the regulatory responsibilities of CCFA holders and the protections available to subscribers and local advisory councils.

The Council raised related concerns during Docket No. 25-08-11 regarding the continuing responsibilities of CCFA holders, particularly as those responsibilities affect cable advisory councils and PEG access.

Connecticut expressly addresses community access programming and operations for CCFA holders under CGS Section 16-331s, which incorporates specified requirements of Sections 16-331a and 16-333 and associated regulations.

The recent Spectrum TV Lite exchange demonstrates that the distinction between regulated cable services and other television offerings is not just theoretical.

Charter has expressly identified TV Lite as an OTT product and explained that PEG carriage requirements therefore do not apply to that offering. At the same time, Charter has confirmed that PEG programming remains available through its lowest-tier linear cable package.

These distinctions may be important to subscribers considering changes to their existing cable service. A subscriber selecting a new television offering may encounter different programming, functionality, equipment arrangements, or access to local channels even if the subscriber's previous package remains available.

The introduction and marketing of such offerings within an existing CCFA service area raises questions concerning how the applicable notice requirements distinguish between new, optional products and changes to the programming or service options available to cable subscribers.

The statutory right of an advisory council to receive advance notice, hold a public hearing, and make recommendations before qualifying changes are implemented allows local councils to identify precisely these issues.

In the present case, advisory council review identified questions concerning PEG availability, legacy Cox package availability, equipment requirements, DVR functionality, recurring charges, and differences between published and quoted pricing.

Clarification of the governing statutory regime would therefore provide guidance not only for the September 2026 changes but also for future transitions involving traditional cable and OTT television offerings.

VI. Application to the September 2026 Programming and Pricing Changes

Once PURA determines the relationship among Sections 16-331v, 16-331z, and 16-333f, the Council respectfully requests that PURA apply that interpretation to the present controversy.

If Section 16-333f and RCSA Sections 16-333f-1 through 16-333f-3 remain applicable to CoxCom, PURA should determine whether Charter's introduction of the Spectrum packages constituted a programming or rate change under those provisions and what advance notice was required.

If PURA determines that Section 16-331v exclusively governs, the Council requests clarification of the separate obligations contained in subsections (a) and (b).

Section 16-331v(a) refers broadly to notice to PURA concerning "any planned programming or rate changes," while subsection (b) uses the narrower formulation of "planned elimination or reduction in programming or planned rate increases" in establishing notice requirements applicable to subscribers and advisory councils.

The Council therefore requests clarification as to whether the September 16 2026 introduction of Spectrum programming and pricing constituted a programming or rate change requiring thirty days' advance notice to PURA under subsection (a), even if PURA determines that the narrower subscriber and advisory council requirements of subsection (b) were not triggered.

The Council also requests clarification regarding what constitutes "implementation" of such a change. The fact that an existing subscriber may remain on a grandfathered Cox package does not necessarily resolve whether a new programming and rate structure has been implemented when it becomes available for sale and begins governing the options presented to subscribers seeking new or modified service.

The Spectrum TV Lite clarification adds another dimension to this question. PURA should consider whether the introduction of an optional OTT offering, as distinguished from a modification to an existing cable package, falls within the applicable programming and rate-change notice provisions and what facts are relevant to making that determination.

The Council seeks clarification of the statutory notice obligations applicable to the particular transition described in Charter's September 16 communication.

VII. Advisory Council and Subscriber Notice

The Council intends to conduct a public hearing regarding the Spectrum programming and pricing changes on October 14, 2026.

The Council is proceeding with that hearing without conceding whether Charter's September 16 communication constituted legally sufficient notice. The Council seeks to preserve and exercise its statutory advisory role while the applicable notice requirements remain unresolved.

The Council Chair has reviewed Cox billing statements dated August 24 and September 24 and has not identified advance notice to subscribers concerning the introduction of the new Spectrum programming packages and pricing structure.

Charter maintains that subscriber notice was unnecessary because existing subscribers who take no action experience no change to their existing Cox service.

Whether that conclusion is correct depends upon the statutory interpretation requested in this petition and the application of the resulting framework to the Spectrum transition.

VIII. Requested Declaratory Ruling

For these reasons, the Cox Cable Advisory Council, Manchester Franchise, respectfully requests that PURA issue a declaratory ruling determining:

1. **Whether CGS Section 16-331v exclusively governs programming and rate-change notice requirements applicable to CCFA holders, or whether CGS Section 16-333f and RCSA Sections 16-333f-1 through 16-333f-3 remain applicable pursuant to CGS Section 16-331z;**
2. **Whether the existence of a CCFA-specific statutory provision addressing a particular regulatory subject supersedes otherwise applicable CATV or public service company statutes, regulations, and PURA orders addressing the same subject, or whether those requirements remain applicable unless the General Assembly has provided an applicable exemption;**
3. **The respective scope of the notice obligations contained in Section 16-331v(a) and Section 16-331v(b), including the distinction between "any planned programming or rate changes" under subsection (a) and "planned elimination or reduction in programming or planned rate increases" under subsection (b);**
4. **Whether Charter's September 16 2026 introduction of Spectrum programming packages, pricing, equipment requirements, and associated charges triggered the notice requirements of Section 16-331v, Section 16-333f and its implementing regulations, or both;**
5. **Whether and under what circumstances the introduction of an optional OTT television offering to existing cable subscribers constitutes a programming or**

rate change for purposes of the applicable notice statutes, taking into account the nature of the offering, its relationship to existing cable service, and any resulting changes to programming or charges;

6. **When the September 16 2026 programming and pricing changes were or will be considered "implemented" for purposes of the applicable notice requirements;**
7. **Whether Charter's September 16, 2026 communication satisfied the applicable notice requirements and, if so, the earliest permissible implementation date; and**
8. **What advance notice obligations apply when a legacy Cox subscriber seeks to modify service and, as a result, is presented with or transitioned to a Spectrum offering involving different programming, pricing, equipment, functionality, or recurring charges.**

The Council respectfully submits that resolution of these questions will clarify a statutory issue previously disputed in Docket No. 25-08-11 and now directly affecting the regulatory relationship among Charter/CoxCom, PURA, subscribers, and local cable advisory councils.

Because the Spectrum transition is underway and the Council is scheduled to conduct its public hearing on October 14, 2026, the Council respectfully requests expedited consideration of this petition to the extent practicable.

Respectfully submitted,



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Senator Norm Needleman, Chair, Energy & Technology Committee
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Attachments:

E-mail from Jennifer Young, Spectrum on October 8 2026
2026.09.28 Spectrum Response to Manchester CAC Lettters
25-08-11 OCC Reply Brief 1.8.2026 Final