



Study finds cable companies have major economic impact

Growth: According to the report, New Hampshire's major cable firms generate \$622.8 million.

By DENIS PAISTE

MANCHESTER — New Hampshire's major cable firms have a \$622.8 million impact on the state's economy, according to a study released Wednesday by the New England Cable and Telecommunications Inc.

"They saw 10 percent employment growth from 2006 to 2010, while the U.S. and state overall had lost employment," said Martin Romitti, director of economic and public policy research at the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute, which prepared the report.

In New Hampshire, the report focused on three cable providers: Charter Communications, Comcast and Time Warner Cable.

Together, the report said, those companies:

- Employed 1,437 in 2010, with a combined payroll of \$104.1 million;
- Made direct investments of more than \$229.3 million on capital improvements from 2006 to 2010, including \$52.3 million in 2010 alone.

- Contributed \$20.4 million in state and local taxes and \$10.4 million in franchise fees in 2010.

"Overall the results of the study show the cable industry has been a major and positive force in New Hampshire," said Andrew Russell, New England spokesman for Time Warner Cable.

"That's at a time when the New Hampshire economy has really needed it," he said.

Comcast has employees in New Hampshire at 10 offices, including in Manchester, Portsmouth and Concord.

"It's a growing industry and was able to hold its own even despite a bad economy," Romitti said.

"Part of that, and a large part of that, is even though people pay for these services with their disposable income, it's not really a case any more that this is just a luxury. I think people really look at the high-speed Internet as well as their television as vital components to their lifestyles and livelihood."

The report said New Hampshire's cable companies are significant broadband providers within the state, contributing nearly three-quarters of all wired high-speed lines (73.7 percent), which is the highest percentage in New England.

Since 2005, high-speed cable broadband lines in New Hampshire have increased 75 percent, from 188,000 to 329,000 in 2010, the report said.

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