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## **Abstract**

We consider the effect of government-owned telecommunications providers on privately owned rivals by comparing the presence of private telecommunications services providers alongside municipal competitors in the US telecommunications industry from 1999 through 2002. Our primary finding is that the presence of a municipal provider is negatively correlated with a city's having private providers. However, the marginal effects indicate that the effect of municipal competition on private provision is largely concentrated on the first entrant, suggesting cities may choose to provide telecommunications services in areas with inadequate demand to support private provision.

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