

Charter Spectrum Greedy Threesome



John Malone

Chairman, Liberty Media Corporation/Liberty Broadband Corporation (LMC/LBC), rakes in millions every year from numerous sources including Charter Communications which is primarily owned and controlled by Malone/LMC/LBC. According to LBC's 2019 proxy statement, Malone owns 49% or 1,282,331 shares of LBC's common stock valued at \$124.56 a share on 12/31/19. In 2018 Mr. Malone was paid \$314,977 to serve on the board of Charter Communications. **Mr. Malone's net worth is \$7.4 billion.**



Gregory Maffei

President and CEO of LMC/LBC, sits on Charter Communications board of directors. From 2017-2019 his compensation from LMC totaled **\$84 million**. In 2018, Mr. Maffei was also paid \$344,962 to serve on Charter Communications board of directors.

According to Liberty Broadband Corporation's 2019 proxy statement, Maffei owns 1.6% of LBC's common stock. **His net worth is estimated to be at least \$196 million.** He also serves on Dartmouth College's board of trustees.



Thomas Rutledge

Charter Communications Chairman & CEO, received compensation of \$114,486,307 from Charter for the years 2016-2018 and owned about \$700 million worth of company stock on May 15, 2020. News outlets reported Rutledge, ignoring Center for Disease Control guidelines, **recklessly resisted pleas from office and call center employees to work from home after 230 of them tested positive for Covid-19.** Rutledge is on the board of directors and past chairman of NCTA-The Internet & Television Association, the policymaking body whose policies are harmful to consumers, cities and states.

Defrauding Internet Subscribers and Bashing Workers

Charter Communications, headquartered in Stamford Connecticut, is a telecommunications and mass media company that offers Internet, Cable TV and Phone service under the brand name Spectrum.

Malone's/Maffei's Liberty Media/Liberty Broadband Corporation is the primary owner and maintains complete control over Charter Spectrum's policies and actions.

In 2018, Charter Communications, the largest cable provider in New York, reached a **\$174 million settlement with New York State for defrauding internet subscribers.**

In 2019, Glassdoor, one of the world's largest job and recruiting sites, listed Charter Communications **among the 20 worst companies to work for** citing "overbearing management, instability, poor wages, rigid politics, and a stressful working environment..."

In June 2019, five female TV reporters on Charter Spectrum's 24-hour NY1 news channel filed an **age/gender discrimination lawsuit against Charter Communications** charging that numerous long-tenured, older employees were terminated shortly after its merger with Time Warner Cable in 2016. Collectively, the women worked at NY1 for more than

100 years yet were "blatantly marginalized and cast aside in favor of younger men and women." The *New York Times* reported, "An under appreciated aspect of sexism in the workplace is age discrimination... women in the TV news business are punished for getting older."

The 21st century robber barons owning and running Charter Spectrum **exhibited their unconscionable greed by demanding that 1800 of their employees in New York, members of IBEW Local Union 3, agree to drastic cuts in their health coverage and the elimination of retirement benefits and job security gained through decades of good faith negotiations.** Malone's, Maffei's and Rutledge's unbridled greed is only topped by the arrogance exhibited by their negotiators whose intransigence at the bargaining table led to Local 3 members voting to strike on March 28, 2017.

Charter Communications is now urging workers to decertify the union. If Local 3 loses this epic battle, it will constitute yet another huge blow to the basic foundation of a vibrant labor movement—which has been responsible for a more equitable distribution of wealth and growth of a middle class which companies like Charter Communications are trying to destroy.

Charter Spectrum and Telecom Lobby's Assault on the Public Interest

Charter Spectrum and its CEO Thomas Rutledge, a director and Immediate Past Chairman of Washington, D.C. based NCTA -The Internet & Television Association, are leading the assault on public service broadcasting stations, networks and their free speech, non-commercial programming.

For decades, the cable operators have agreed with municipalities to provide "in kind" services to local communities,



Striking Local 3 members and their allies rally on the steps of New York City Hall, to mark the 1,000th day of the strike.

as well as a fee of up to 5 percent of gross cable TV revenue, as compensation for using public property and the public rights of way. These fees and in kind services help fund cable stations that offer public, educational and government programming and “I-Nets” which are institutional networks connecting critical police and fire services.

But cable giants, led by Charter, have successfully lobbied the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to rule that greedy cable companies can now charge municipalities for the in-kind contributions. This will result in a loss of hundreds of millions of dollars from services that are in the public interest to further line the pockets of billion dollar corporations and their rapacious executives.

Municipalities in NY State are up in arms because the cable operators refuse to negotiate in good faith to renew expired cable TV franchise agreements. Instead of threatening to pull their franchises, the NY State Public Service Commission (PSC), which must approve all cable TV franchises, is irresponsibly rubber-stamping annual “extensions,” leaving municipalities helpless to manage the public rights of way in the public interest.

Municipalities Are Creating Their Own Broadband Networks

Throughout America hundreds of cities, towns, counties and villages are assuring access to internet services for all residents, businesses and government agencies through Internet for All. Internet for All is a public option for broadband service with which disreputable telecom giants like Charter Communications, involved in discriminatory practices, defrauding customers, price gouging and union-busting would have to compete.

This is how it works. States and municipalities provide funding to cover the cost of constructing high-speed broadband networks that are built and operated by public agencies. Consumers are charged a reasonable fee to obtain access to the network. This provides a strong incentive for existing telecom giants to “reduce skyrocketing bills and improve subpar service.”



Chattanooga, Tennessee already offers a public option for broadband service and provides the world’s first 10-gigabit per second speeds for all its customers. Astonishingly, **Chattanooga’s customers are browsing the internet at a speed that is 166 times faster than the standard download service offered by Charter Spectrum in New York City!**

In an August 22, 2019 *New York Daily News* op-ed, IBEW Local 3 Business Manager Chris Erikson pointed out that giant telecom companies “have wielded monopolistic market power to force substandard services onto customers who have nowhere else to go, while pricing others out entirely. Only a broken system would allow 44% of New Yorkers in poverty, 42% of seniors and 41% of people without a high school degree to be left disconnected. And only public competition can fix it.”

Thousands File Complaints Against Predator Charter Spectrum

The Better Business Bureau has received about 15,000 complaints over the past three years and has given Charter Spectrum its lowest rating, an F. “Complaints primarily allege poor customer service, billing errors, or misleading advertising. In addition, consumers have reported receiving no notice about rate hikes and slow internet speeds.” Other complaint sites focus on terrible, unreliable service and price gouging.

Below is a representative sample of recent complaints made by Charter Spectrum customers in New York and across America:

Deb: Since TWC changed to Spectrum, the bill goes up, the service goes down, and the Internet speed is 1/3 what it was before.

Christine: Spectrum cable Internet

is the absolute worst company I’ve ever dealt with... you will not have any service but they sure continue to bill every month.

Chad: If I could rate them a negative 5 star I would. Do not get Spectrum for your business whatever you do. We will be switching all of our lines after Christmas.

Gary: I check my bill monthly, find this sneaky company attempting to cheat me every month.

Sikkov: Avoid Spectrum like the plague they are.

Michelle: I wish I could give it 0 stars !!! The absolute worst business and service I’ve ever had !

Ernestine: We have made it our mission to tell everyone about this so they will not be taken in by the greed, lies and mistreatment of this company.

Choose another company.

Andy: Absolutely useless, this company needs to be shut down.

Graciella: Spectrum is the worst cable company I’ve ever experienced. They’re unprofessional. They don’t care about their customers. They only care about getting their money. Their service is garbage and I hate spectrum!

Frank: You need negative stars so we can truly tell everyone how bad this company is. Whatever you do don’t get scammed into using spectrum

Sean: This company should be sued and fined for fraud.

Chris: If you have any other option, don’t waste your time or money on this company. Maybe some other companies are just as bad, but they cannot be any worse!

Here's what you can do to help assure **Internet for All** in New York City and elsewhere, and to win **justice for Charter Spectrum strikers:**

► **Tell your city council members** to support Internet for All (Publicly- Owned Cable).

► **Tell the NYS Public Service Commission (PSC)** not to grant or renew franchise agreements until Charter Spectrum negotiates fair funding agreements. Municipalities must demand and secure full funding irrespective of the FCC's caving in to giant telecom company lobbying.

► **NYC and NYS public employees' retirement systems have more than a billion dollars invested in Greedy Threesome companies** Liberty Media/Charter

Communications (Spectrum) and their subsidiaries. **Public sector workers and their unions should strongly urge municipal and state comptrollers, and trustees overseeing their pension funds,** not to invest in and furthermore, divest and/or vote against management all stock and bond holdings in Liberty Media Corporation/Charter Communications and their related companies including: Associated Partners, Atlanta Braves, Braves Holdings LLC, Discovery, Inc., Evite, Formula One, GCI Holdings, GCI Liberty, General Communications, Ideiasnet, Lending Tree, Liberty

Broadband Corporation, Liberty Technology Venture Capital, Liberty TripAdvisor Holdings, Live Nation, Qurate Retail, SiriusXM Skyhook aka TruePosition.

► **Visit strikers' website UnplugSpectrum.com.** Watch the NYC Public Cable Option animated video and sign the petition in support of "Publicly-Owned Cable." Ban Spectrum from your homes and businesses where feasible.

► Please contribute to the Campaign to Advance Internet/Broadband Justice by visiting: gofundme.com/f/win-justice

**Campaign to Advance
Internet/Broadband Justice**
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