Preamble. Whereas, There is very great need of a cheaper telephone service in Baltimore City, the number of telephones being very small in proportion to the population on account of the very high prices demanded by the company which now has a monopoly of the telephone business here; and

Preamble. Whereas, The said company has given official notice to the public through the report submitted by the Telephone Commission, appointed by His Excellency Governor Brown, under and by virtue of Chapter 207 of the Acts of Assembly of 1894, which report was submitted to the General Assembly on the 6th day of January, 1896, that the said company will not and cannot reduce its rates for telephone service; and

Preamble. Whereas, At the present rates the telephone, although greatly needed in business, is beyond the reach of persons of ordinary means, and the use of it is confined to a favored few who have the means of paying the high prices charged; and

Preamble. Whereas, It would be a great boon to the persons of moderate means, and a very great advantage to the business community at large to have a cheaper telephone service; and

Preamble. Whereas, The Home Telephone and Telegraph Company of Baltimore City has declared itself ready and willing to supply such a service at rates very much lower than those now prevailing; and

Whereas, The subways heretofore constructed by the City of Baltimore for the purpose of containing the wires of the Police and Fire-Alarm Telegraph System of the city are provided with several ducts capable of containing numbers of wires over and above the number of ducts required for the city's use; and

Preamble.

Whereas, These ducts produce no revenue to the city as they stand, but can be made a source of revenue if leased to the said Home Telephone and Telegraph Company of Baltimore City; now, therefore

Preamble.

SECTION 1. Be it enacted and ordained by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore City, That the corporation known as the Home Telephone and Telegraph Company of Baltimore City, incorporated under the General Laws of the State of Maryland, be and it is hereby granted permission to use such of the ducts constituting part of the subways heretofore constructed by the City of Baltimore for the use of its Police and Fire Alarm Telegraph System as the Board of Fire Commissioners may certify are not needed by the city for the use of the said Police and Fire Alarm Telegraph System, and as may be designated by the said Telephone Company in its written statement to be filed with the Mayor as hereinafter provided, for the period of ten years and until such time as the city's general subway system is ready for use in the localities now covered by the said subways of the Police and Fire-Alarm Telegraph System; provided, that the said Home Telephone and Telegraph Company of Baltimore City shall pay to the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, through

Permission to use ducts.

Period of time.