November 13, 2018

The Honorable Ajit V. Pai  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission

455 12th Street, Southwest  
Washington, DC, 20544

Dear Chairman Pai,

We write to express our concern about and disapproval of the proposals and tentative conclusions set forth in the FCC’s September 25 Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making in *Implementation of Section 621(a)(1) of the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984 as Amended by the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992*, MB Docket 05- 311.

As an employee of Watertown Cable Access Corp and a resident of Watertown, MA, I see how much the Watertown community relies on our PEG channels to provide them coverage of local events, meetings and news. We get calls several times a week from people asking if we are going to be broadcasting live or rebroadcasting important government meetings that a lot of community members are not able to attend, depending on time and location of these meetings. The same goes for our live or rebroadcasted high school sports. Not only is it beneficial for parents or other students to watch their children or classmates participate in these activities, but it also benefits the athletes to be able to go back and watch the recordings to learn from mistakes or celebrate a great victory.

Other than watching our broadcasts, community members are so appreciative when we take time to film their events. We have spread the word through our medium about so many initiatives including opioid addiction, community preservation, and so much more. We offer an experience that you cannot get from the local paper, conveying people’s true feelings and emotions through a lens. Without local cable, the awareness of these issues that are so central to Watertown would be lost or not taken care of in the way they should be.

This local presence enables the residents of Watertown to watch uniquely local programming about their community and local events and issues of interest to them. And that was the intent of the PEG provisions of the 1984 Cable Act – to enhance local voices, serve local community needs and interests, and strengthen our local democracy. By defining “franchise fee” in an overly broad fashion to include “in-kind” support, the FCC’s proposals will shift the fair balance between cable franchising authorities and cable operators and will force communities to choose between franchise fees and PEG channels, – something that was never the intent of the Act.

We appreciate your consideration and hope you will protect PEG channels in our community and others by choosing not to adopt many of the proposals in the Further Notice.

Sincerely,

Andrea Santopietro

CC: The Honorable Michael O’Rielly, Commissioner

The Honorable Brendan Carr, Commissioner  
The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel, Commissioner