I am writing to express my 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.

I have worked in PEG access for 20 years. My first experience was in the late 1990’s. I taught K-8 television production in the Shrewsbury Public Schools, in Shrewsbury, MA. My students videotaped concerts, plays, classroom projects, and sporting events. The elementary schools and the middle school hosted monthly news magazines. Many of these students have gone on to have lucrative careers in film and television. Educational Access gave them that start. It also allowed parents to see what their kids were learning in school.

I next moved to Shrewsbury Government TV. Every government department in Shrewsbury had their own show. Con. Jim McGovern’s show won an award. We also taped all of the city meetings. The residents got so much information on the government channel that new people started to run for office in the town. Political involvement in the town became more robust. When people have information, they get involved. That is what PEG does for communities.

I am currently the Executive Director in Waltham, MA. I run the public and the government channels. The impact in Waltham from our stations has been immense. We assist dozens of non-profits with video support for their fundraising efforts. We produce news segment from our weekly news program promoting the good works that they are doing for the city. We work with people of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, and political diversity to produce shows and share information with the city. This is a gift that cannot be measured and needs to be protected.

My biggest concern is that American citizens will lose the last place where freedom of speech is allowed. PEG access has no corporate or political intervention. We air everything! It doesn’t matter if we agree with the message; we give people a voice to share what they believe. THIS RIGHT NEEDS TO BE PROTECTED!!!

This local presence enables the residents of Massachusetts cities and towns 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.

I 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.