

November 6, 2018

The Honorable Ajit V. Pai  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
455 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Southwest  
Washington, DC, 20544

Dear Chairman Pai,

I write 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.

My community, Ashland, Mass, has a terrific local cable channel called WACA TV. They are the most important tool we have for maintaining a transparent and democratic local government. Isn't that what America is all about? If my community loses this tool, there will be no way to know what is going on in our town. A community that is not aware of itself will lose the ability to act as a cohesive economic engine and become a ghost town. It will be hard to support local if the residents do not know who the local folks are.

Public, Education and Governmental [PEG] programs keep my community strong. It gives every day Americans the opportunity to take their innovative ideas for shows and share them with the world. Think of PEG as an innovation incubator for all things film. I look forward to seeing filmed plays, teen talent shows, economic tips, political exchanges, cooking shows, decorating shows, angel reading shows, nutrition shows, yoga shows, marching bands, small business owner interviews, Ashland Day celebrations, high school graduations, planning board meetings, zoning board meetings, board of selectmen meetings, and any other idea local residents devise to share their personal knowledge with the world.

You may not know this, but small business owners, the backbone of our economy, on tight budgets interview each other on our local cable show. It gives them much needed exposure, the kind they do not have the money to pursue. PEGs help our local economy thrive. Get rid of PEGS and it will hurt small business owners and, ultimately, the overall economy.

Why would the FCC would want to take such a fabulous tool away from US citizens? Having an

accessible Cable show is a small but valuable gift to taxpayers. The in-kind monies set forth in the FCC's September 25<sup>th</sup> Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making may seem small to the FCC, but they are large to tightly-budgeted, underfunded local cable channels. This rule change may potentially put my hardworking cable TV station out of business.

I do not think that is the FCC's intent, so I ask you to please reconsider including "in-kind" support in the "Franchise fee." It doesn't belong in there. In-kind is just that -- things meant to "be kind" for struggling nonprofits doing a world of local good. Trying to turn "in-kind" into money defeats the whole purpose of this kind gesture.

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 -- is needed more than ever. 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.

Sincerely,

Julie Nardone

Resident of Ashland Mass

CC: The Honorable Michael O'Rielly, Commissioner The Honorable Brendan Carr, Commissioner The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel, Commissioner