



MUNICIPAL LEAGUE OF METRO ST. LOUIS

LINKING LOCAL COMMUNITIES
STRENGTHENING LOCAL
GOVERNMENT

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FCC Mailroom

November 14, 2018, 2018

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Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: MB Docket No. 05-311

Dear Madam Secretary:

I am writing to express the Municipal League of Metro St. Louis's opposition to the FCC's proposed new rules that would appear to allow cable operators to deduct from their cable franchise payments the market value of PEG channel capacity and other "inkind" services, thus reducing the existing cable television franchise fee for use of public rights-of-way. Video providers are profiting from the use of these public rights-of-way, and it is reasonable to require that the public receive benefit for allowing use of public property, without the proposed reduction.

Many of our 85-member municipalities currently levy franchise fee for use of its rights-of-way, and revenues generated by this fee are used to fund needed municipal services including, public safety, public works and parks.

St. Louis County is also a member of the League. This would also be a significant loss to the St. Louis County which levies a 5% franchise fee for use of its rights-of-way. The annual income of \$6 million helps fund the Higher Education Channel (HEC-TV), road and stormwater projects for the county. In addition, several municipal members and St. Louis County require video service providers to provide channel capacity for local programming like HEC-TV, as specifically allowed by Missouri's 2007 Video Services Providers Act Sections 67.2675 to 67.2714 RSMo.

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The League fully supports the County and values the public access to HEC-TV which produces more local television programming than all commercial or non-commercial television stations in the St. Louis region. For 25 years, HEC-TV has been instrumental in offering college level telecourses, enabling viewers to earn more than 50,000 college credit hours per year. Today, HEC-TV is the world leader in creating interactive distance learning opportunities and produces standards-based curriculum for educators and students to use all HEC-TV programming in classrooms nationwide. When the State of Missouri faced a workforce crises with 750,000 adults having no high school education, HEC-TV programmed a series of courses leading viewers to GED completion.

As stated, the Municipal League of Metro St. Louis is opposed to the new FCC rule allowing cable operators to deduct the value of PEG channels from their franchise fees.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Pat Kelly
Executive Director
Municipal League Metro St. Louis

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