



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
House of Representatives  
State House, Boston 02133-1054

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Committees:  
Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development  
Health Care Financing  
State Administration and Regulatory Oversight

December 5, 2018

The Honorable Ajit Pai, Chairman  
The Honorable Michael O'Rielly, Commissioner  
The Honorable Brendan Carr, Commissioner  
The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel, Commissioner

Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
455 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Southwest  
Washington, DC, 20544

Dear Chairman Pai:

I write to support the Comments of Massachusetts Community Media, Inc. (MassAccess) and to disapprove 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 State Representative for the 1<sup>st</sup> Plymouth District of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I often hear from my constituents in regard to the benefits they receive from viewing our local access public television station programs. It helps to keep individuals connected to the community, provides timely news, opportunities, local entertainment, and information that without, many would continue to be isolated from their community. Often, many of these viewers are our most vulnerable citizens; low-income seniors, disabled, and housebound individuals.

Additionally, as a government show host, I know how valuable getting resource information out there has been to my constituents in need. Whether it is information on how to get senior tax credits, apply for housing, get fuel assistance, find a local food pantry, or learn about available transportation options, I have heard from constituents how learning about these resources has helped and brought comfort to them.

I support comments made by MassAccess, especially the following:

- The FCC lacks authority to impair private franchise contracts
- Section 622 of the Cable Act defines "Franchise Fees" and the FCC has no right to redefine
- Any attempt to redefine "Franchise Fees" weakens the authority of local municipalities

- The rulemaking invents "Cable-Related In-kind Contributions and "Fair Market Valuation" where there is no precedent
- Section 622 of the Cable Act states that "[a]ny Federal agency may not regulate the amount of the franchise fees paid by a cable operator."

Community media stations allow the residents of my community to watch and create uniquely local programming about the area we live in and local events and issues of interest to them. It has proven to be invaluable to our most vulnerable. Such 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.

Sincerely,



Matthew Muratore  
State Representative