December 6, 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 12th Street, Southwest  
Washington, DC, 20544

Dear Chairman Pai,

I write to support the Comments of Catamount Access Television and the Cable Act Preservation Alliance (CAPA) 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.

Please remember that the United States Government mandated that television signals be received through digital cable or satellite company subscriptions several years ago. That act put those companies in a public utility position as controlling providers of an in-home service. Financing public access programming through the PEG provisions of the 1984 Cable Act was the justification for this monopoly to ensure that Americans has the ability to communicate without interference from corporate agendas. Local access broadcasts enable our local arts, community service, educational and governmental bodies to reach an audience that simply would not be available without local television. Concurrently, these broadcasting facilities provide employment on a local scale in an industry that has been centralized away from towns such as Bennington thanks to the monopolization of the industry.

Local television presence enables the residents of Bennington County 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 Access in our community and others by choosing not to adopt many of the proposals in the Further Notice.

Sincerely,

Gregory Van Houten

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Bennington, VT 05201