

December 5th, 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 the Cable Act Preservation Alliance ("CAPA") 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.

I'm a media educator from Cambridge, Massachusetts where we have an amazing public access station, Cambridge Community TV. I work there as the Teaching Artist for a youth employment program, for which we hire teens from around our city to learn how to produce media art. This unique initiative is made possible by funding from cable companies. It's one of many examples of such programs we run here at Cambridge Community TV that are at risk of extinction if the FCC votes to end the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992.

When I heard about the possible defunding of public access TV by cable companies I knew I had to speak up. This is an issue that's very near and dear to me, and I hope you consider the words of myself and every other person who has written to voice their concerns. I'm writing on behalf of the teens I teach who benefit in countless ways from our youth media program. I'm also writing on behalf of our members who, due to various obstacles, are unable to write a letter to the FCC. They're the reason why Cambridge Community TV exists and thrives.

Without public access TV stations, which are funded primarily by cable revenues, thousands and thousands of Americans will be silenced. To remove funding from such institutions is a form of oppression. As cable companies hike up their TV subscriptions,

to give them such a dramatic financial cut is simply inexcusable. Please consider the countless numbers of everyday Americans you'd be hurting if you were to give them this break. We are funded by the smallest sliver of their cable companies' billion-dollar revenue streams and one would never guess that given the impacts us public access TV stations have on our communities and our country. We make every dollar count towards a better tomorrow for all Americans.

Here at Cambridge Community TV we not only welcome folks from every socioeconomic background into our facilities, and teach them how to produce media using stateoftheart equipment and high-quality instruction, we offer them the platform to share their work. This not only gives them a sense of self-worth, it also disrupts mainstream media and the social constructs it has created of people of color, people living with disabilities, immigrants, LGBTQ folk, and more. We serve people who oftentimes are living at the fringes of society, who, more than anyone else, need greater media representation and presence. Without it, they're at an even greater risk of further erasure and oppression. We believe in the power of media to disrupt the status quo and to allow for marginalized people to find their seat at the table.

To cut funding for public access is to cut out the voices of these vulnerable community members. As a person privileged enough to afford equipment and classes without places like Cambridge Community Television, I fear for those who aren't as fortunate as myself. Coming from a person who won't be as deeply impacted by the loss of such critical funding for this organization, it should say a lot that I am taking the time anyways to write to you. I care about my community--I LOVE my community and I've witnessed firsthand the impacts of public access media on countless people. I went to Emerson College to pursue a major created in order to prove places like Cambridge Community TV work, and matter. I wouldn't have spent a quarter million dollars out of pocket to pursue a degree to prove a fantasy.

Nonprofits are constantly under threat of defunding. As a public access TV station, we are always trying to figure out how to financially support our organization. We host fundraisers, we partner with private donors, and we canvass to support ourselves. Still, the portion of our funding that comes from cable makes a huge difference for us and without it, the impacts would be catastrophic. We wouldn't be able to fund our youth media program, which has been around for 25 years. We wouldn't be able to offer media classes for senior citizens. We wouldn't be able to put together broadcasts about what is happening in Cambridge. There are so many things that would simply disappear if cable were to stop funding us. The thought of this is heartbreaking. The implications of this decision are also very disturbing.

This is a matter of inclusivity. I cannot fathom why anyone would ever vote to stop funding public access TV stations. Places like Cambridge Community TV are direct access points for folks who have no media representation, particularly media representation created by and for their communities, to come and create. We take pride in our ability to serve them and to give them the tools and opportunities to participate in one of society's most influential institutions. Cable companies should be proud of these initiatives, which they have so kindly supported since 1992, and should continue to do so. If the FCC were to end the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992, the ramifications of this decision would have profound effects on the Cambridge community. It would also take us one step back in the progress we've made to ensure the media of this country is truly reflective of all the voices and perspectives of its people. I sincerely hope you put inclusion over income in this decision.

Thank you for your time,

Xia Rondeau

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