I strongly disagree with the rule changes proposed by the Federal Communications Commission, where cable providers would be able to count the value of the PEG stations themselves toward the fee they pay to local communities.

I grew up in a small town in Massachusetts. My local station acts as an essential part of town communication and information. They film everything from high school graduation to town meetings. My father, a small local business owner, will still watch board of selectman meetings from our kitchen every week. The station is an essential part of the town’s ability to stay informed about local news and politics. Implementing these changes would put that important community programming at risk.

Further, my local station has played an essential role in my life. They run programs and workshops teaching locals of all ages how to film and edit. When I was a high schooler, these programs were eye-opening for me. I am now a Yale university student studying film and media as a result of those programs. I would not be where I am today without the education that I got from my local television station. I am not alone. Several others in my high school have also chosen film and media professions as a result of their classes and workshops.

Allowing cable companies to choose the fee they pay to local communities would only result in less money going to local towns like mine that desperately need the funding to continue their important work. It would threaten the rights of citizens to be informed about their local community and would likely stop the work that stations do to educate their students of all ages. I urge you to maintain the franchise fee currently in use to preserve the integrity and work of local stations.