

December 11, 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 am writing to support the Comments of Brattleboro Community Television, Inc. (File ID 1113560010350) 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.

Public access TV is one of the very most democratic forms of communication in our country. Wholly dedicated to our right to freedom of speech, it is open and available to anyone in the community to create and produce their own show or interactive presentation. Last year, I had an idea for a weekly community talk show, where I would invite folks from the community to come on and talk about openly about who they are, what they do and their place in the Brattleboro area. My goal, first and foremost, was to create connection in our community by showing our diversity; to have a very wide range of guests – from the Town Manager to tattoo artists. In a little over a year, I have produced 55 shows and these shows have had over 6500 views. It has been picked up by other public access stations in the state, nation and internationally, and has been shared widely. With the extraordinary good will of a trained staff with great expertise this show has succeeded beyond my hopes. It has made an impact in the community, bringing it together, on a weekly basis, by letting us hear each others stories, perspectives, ideas and concerns.

This local presence enables the residents in the Brattleboro area to create and 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 – something that was never the intent of the Act – and could ultimately result in such reduction in franchise fees as to defund PEG Access in our state.

I 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,

Wendy B. O’Connell
19 Sun Hill Rd.
Putney, Vt. 05346