December 13, 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,

We 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.

Bennington County includes several towns. We are a rural state and it is not always possible for all of us to get out to the various board meetings that affect us. CAT TV has made this possible. We are now better informed citizens, not only of our local government but of the state government. When I was on the Vermont State Board of Education I was pleased that our meetings would appear on CAT TV. We have three channels. Channel 15 is the Public channel providing an opportunity for various organizations in the community to share their events and experiences and services with the community . Channel 16 is the Arts and Education channel which offers many wonderful experiences such as children book readings, local school board meetings and other programs about music and art, including the work of local artists. Channel 17 is the channel about government which as I indicated earlier helps us individually and as a community. Besides that the people who are filming these programs are local volunteers. Anyone can sign up for classes in filming and editing. This is a service not only to CAT TV but to other community organizations whose members can use those skills for special projects for those organizations’ needs. Learning how television works not only provides valuable information about the community, but helps practitioners understand all television better.

Commercial companies have to give back to the people who pay the fees that sustain them and public television is a way that benefits everyone.

This local presence enables the residents of our 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,

Sally Sugarman

Bennington College Emerita

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