

12/14/18

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,

On behalf of the **Belmont Council on Aging**, I am writing 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.

If the FCC adopts the proposed rulemaking, the reduction or possible elimination of franchise fee payments to the Town of Belmont will force the closure of our PEG access TV provider, Belmont Media Center (BMC), cause irreparable harm to Belmont, and be devastating to the Belmont Council on Aging and the residents we serve.

The Belmont Council on Aging has come to depend upon the support, services and local programming that BMC provides. Specifically, BMC has assigned a staff producer to work at our Beech Street Community Center directly with our town staff and volunteers to regularly produce local programming, teach classes, provide technical assistance and provide technical support for our programs and events.

Without Belmont Media Center’s vital day-to-day staffing, classes, and local programming, the Council on Aging will have to cut our services and outreach to Belmont senior population, a population that is only growing and needs more services not less.

Belmont Community Media Center enables the residents of Belmont, MA 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.

The Belmont Council on Aging appreciates your consideration and hope you will protect PEG channels in our community and others by choosing **not** to adopt many of the proposals in the Further Notice.

Sincerely,

Nava Niv-Vogel
Director

Town of Belmont Council on Aging
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