

December 14, 2018

The Honorable Ajit V. Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
455 12th Street, Southwest
Washington, DC, 20544

Dear Chairman Pai,

We write to express our concern about and disapproval 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.

We represent the people of Shaftsbury, Vermont, as members of the selectboard and school board. Cable Access Television (CATV) broadcasts our meetings and posts them on YouTube. This is a vital service to our community.

CATV enhances civic involvement by making it easier for citizens to stay informed about local government. Recordings of meetings are used to transcript meeting minutes. CATV provides promotion videos for community events. We depend on these services and our communities will be hurt without them.

The presence of Vermont's 25 Community Access Centers enables the residents of Vermont 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 – 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.

We appreciate 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,

Shaftsbury Selectboard: Tim Scoggins, Tony Krulikowski, Art Whitman
Shaftsbury School Board: Ed Malloy, David Durfee, Tony D'Onofrio, Scott McEnaney

CC: The Honorable Michael O'Rielly, Commissioner
The Honorable Brendan Carr, Commissioner
The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel, Commissioner

