December 14, 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 write 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.

I live in a town that utilizes its three public access channels (Public, Education and Government) to their fullest. These channels are a strong link in the chain that keeps civic participation and town identity at extremely high levels. The station currently broadcasts live all major government meetings, e.g., Selectmen, School Committee, Planning Board, and others, allowing viewers to easily know what is going on in their town government if they cannot attend the meetings in person; it also records the meetings for later rebroadcast. It broadcasts graduations, high school sporting events and school concert performances for community viewing and appreciation. The station provides space, equipment and training for local producers to create shows featuring local news, prominent community members, and community discussion. It is a vital conduit of current community information, discussion and education no one else can provide, and the dedicated staff and volunteers continue to look for ways to strengthen public participation in the community by fostering new ties between potential producers, topics and ideas. Strong, vital towns make for a strong, vital country.

In addition to its dedication to the here and now in Chelmsford, the station has built an audiovisual archive of community media recordings going back twenty years; these recordings enhance the residents’ knowledge of the town’s civic and government history and contribute hugely to strengthening of town identity and motivating residents to continue to invest time, money and talent in the town. Recordings include government meetings, school performances of grades 1-12, public forums covering important town issues, public celebrations of holidays, documentation of historical town buildings, and shows produced by town residents that reflect local topics in a way that no other media available can, or wants to. Essentially, community TV documents local history, and Chelmsford residents need their history in order to know where to go next as a town.

I am not a Chelmsford native, nor was I exposed to community television prior to moving here, but as both a resident and as a five-year Chelmsford TeleMedia volunteer, I have seen firsthand the important role that the station plays in the life of the town. It also plays a vital role in keeping government transparent for its citizens by broadcasting and recording government meetings. Reducing or withdrawing support for Chelmsford community TV station would change this town forever, and not in a good way. Support for community TV as a whole should continue, it is an investment in the long term future that will not be regretted by corporations or stockholders.

Respectfully,

Amy Totten

Chelmsford, MA