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Subject: FYI -- from my spouse
Date: Thu, 8 Feb 2001 11:57:08 -0500

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From: SMTP%"lhgm+@pitt.edu" "lorraine higgins" 7-FEB-2001 19:50:51.53
To: mpowell@fcc.gov, sness@fcc.gov, hfurchtg@fcc.gov
CC: schneider@psc.edu
Subj: Taking the Public out of Public TV?

Mr. Powell,

As a Pittsburgher, I am concerned that WQED is selling off one of our public TV stations (WQEX) and attempting to turn it into a commercial station. This decision was made by its board members, behind closed doors, despite local community complaints and requests for a more public, open discussion of alternatives. Many members of the WQED board are the same people responsible for WQED's financial errors, which they now use as an excuse for the sale of WQEX (another error, in my view).

I ask that you reject their petition to transfer the station into commercial hands, and urge them to fulfill their responsibilities as caretakers of a publicly owned resource.

Sincerely,
Dr. Lorraine D. Higgins
University of Pittsburgh

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mpowell@fcc.gov, sness@fcc.gov, hfurchth@fcc.gov, gtristan@fcc.gov,
To: campbeaj@wpgate.law3.georgetown.edu, slerman@isl-law.com, conematt@hotmail.com [Save](#)
[Address](#)
Subject: save WQEX
Date: Tue, 20 Feb 2001 16:43:47 -0500

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Mr. Powell-
I am writing to urge the FCC to block the sale of Pittsburgh public television station WQEX to a commercial buyer. WQEX is a valuable community resource, and its sale would reduce the already limited amount of non-commercial media available in Pittsburgh. WQED, the station seeking to sell WQEX, has no right to deprive Pittsburghers of WQEX, as it is public property. Pittsburgh does not need another commercial station. It does, however, need WQEX as an important outlet for non-commercial programming. Please insure that Pittsburghers do not lose WQEX as a result of WQED's desire to make money off of what is not theirs. Thank you for your time. Sincerely, Ben Hill

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Subj: Statement of Opposition to WQED petition
Date: Friday, November 16, 2001 1:21:03 PM
To: mpowell@fcc.gov, kabernath@fcc.gov, mcopps@fcc.gov,
kjmweb@fcc.gov, msalas@fcc.gov, slerman@lsl-law.com,
campbeaj@law.georgetown.edu, jmstarr@cipbonline.org

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Please consider this communication as a statement of opposition to the petition of WQED, Pittsburgh, now before the Commission, to commercialize and sell sister station WQEX to Shooting Star, Inc.

The Channel 16 frequency was granted to the Western Pennsylvania community for non-commercial, community educational and informational communications purposes.

For many years, it admirably met its role and purpose in providing diverse programming not available through cable or other local television providers, including its sister station. Then, the board and management of WQED allowed WQEX to lie fallow for the past several years while it devised various schemes to extract cash through commercialization of this public trust and public property.

The channel 16 frequency is not the private property of the WQED board of directors and its management. Its true owners are the public and the community who originally supported the grant of the educational channel and supported its work financially and in many other ways through the years.

I am always delighted when I visit a son who lives in the Baltimore area where I am able to view three different educational television stations, all with diverse and interesting programming. It is a tremendous example of what is possible and Western Pennsylvania should not be denied this opportunity of enhancing its community television offering.

WQED should freely permit the acquisition of the Channel 16 license, without any financial strings attached, by any community organization willing to continue to operate the station as a public trust. It is understood that non-license matters, such as the use of studios, equipment, and transmitters would be open to negotiation. In any event,

the Commission should never permit WQED to commercialize this public asset.

William J. Horvath
2459 Haymaker Road
Monroeville, PA 15146

horvathb@aol.com

DEC 18 2001

Jerold M. Starr**From:** Kirkwoods [thisn@pgh.nauticom.net]**FCC MAIL ROOM****Sent:** Monday, December 10, 2001 12:12 PM**To:** mpowell@fcc.gov; kabernat@fcc.gov; mcopps@fcc.gov; kjmweb@fcc.gov; msalas@fcc.gov; slerman@isl-law.com; campbeaj@law.georgetown.edu; jmstarr@cipbonline.org**Subject:** Oppose dereservation of WQEX

December 10, 2001

Chairman Michael K. Powell, Federal Communications Commission, 445 12th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Powell,

I am writing to the Commission today to **oppose** WQED Pittsburgh's request to "dereserve" the license of WQEX Channel 16 and to sell WQEX to an out-of-town wheeler-dealer. My family and I live in the North Hills of Pittsburgh where we used to watch both WQED and WQEX.

We need Channel 16 to stay as a noncommercial station and to air the diversity of programming that we are not getting from WQED or the commercial stations in this city. I understand there is a community group willing to take over this community resource. I would strongly support rejecting this dereservation and passing the existing noncommercial license to this new group and out of the hands of the current management of WQED Pittsburgh. The people who run WQED have conclusively demonstrated that they do not know how to run public television stations in a fiscally responsible manner. These people should not have control of any licenses, much less TWO!

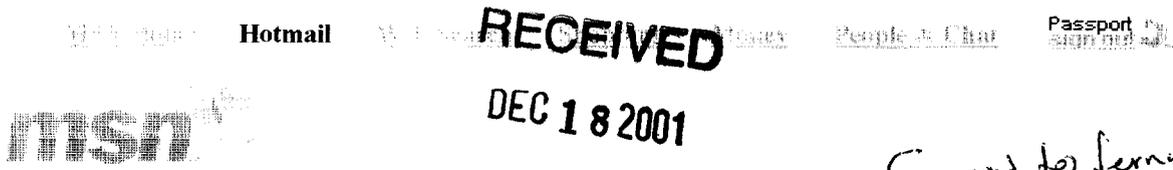
If you allow this dereservation, public television executives all over the country will get the idea that they too, can gamble with their station's money. If the gamble fails, they can sell-off a radio or television license to cover their losses, all the while, keeping their excellent salaries.

WQEX IT IS A COMMUNITY RESOURCE. WE, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, OWN THE AIRWAVES. WE, THE PEOPLE OF PITTSBURGH, CONTRIBUTED VOLUNTARY DONATIONS AND TAX MONEY TO MAKE CHANNEL SIXTEEN. WQEX IS NOT THEIRS TO SELL. IT BELONGS TO THE PUBLIC!

I urge the Commission to rule against this dereservation. The last thing this town needs is another commercial station full of the same junk as the many other existing stations. What we do need is a diverse, noncommercial educational television station run by competent community members.

Thank you,

Frank Kirkwood, 2626 Glenchester Road, Wexford, PA 15090



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conematt@hotmail.com

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From: "Huerta, Adalberto" <ahuerta@ccnlaw.com> [Save Address - Block Sender](#)
 "mpowell@fcc.gov" <mpowell@fcc.gov>, "sness@fcc.gov" <sness@fcc.gov>, "hfurchtg@fcc.gov" <hfurchtg@fcc.gov>, "gtristan@fcc.gov" <gtristan@fcc.gov>, "slerman@lsl-law.com" <slerman@lsl-law.com>
To: <slerman@lsl-law.com>, "CAMPBEAJ@wpgate.law3.georgetown.edu" <CAMPBEAJ@wpgate.law3.georgetown.edu>, "conematt@hotmail.com" <conematt@hotmail.com>
[Save Address](#)

Subject: A filmmaker protests the dereservation of WQEX

Date: Thu, 22 Feb 2001 14:47:42 -0800

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February 22, 2001

The Honorable Michael Powell
 Federal Communications Commission
 445 12th Street, SW
 Washington DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Powell,

As a beginning filmmaker, I would like to voice my opposition to WQED's proposal to dereserve WQEX. While the executives at WQED appear to see WQEX primarily as a commodity that can be sold for millions of dollars, I believe that the station is more properly conceptualized as a home for programs that aspire to inform and educate us as citizens.

Unlike commercial stations which are so desperate to make money that they offer programming that routinely appeals to the lowest common denominator, public television stations frequently produce programs that challenge us as viewers. Within the last ten days alone, WQED has aired two programs--documentaries on Bob Marley and Marcus Garvey--that illustrate public television's capacity to introduce us to works that are both scholarly and engaging. As a filmmaker, these works represent not only the sorts of projects that I admire but also the sorts of projects that I cannot find on commercial television.

Given public television's ongoing history of challenging and serving its viewers, it would be woefully misguided to dereserve WQEX. Please act with all deliberate speed to ensure that WQED's request is thrown out.

Thanks,

Adalberto Huerta

Jerold M. Starr

From: David Hughes [maxwell9@bellatlantic.net]
Sent: Wednesday, November 14, 2001 12:17 PM
To: mpowell@fcc.gov; kabernat@fcc.gov; mcopps@fcc.gov; kjmweb@fcc.gov; msalas@fcc.gov
Cc: slerman@lsl-law.com; campbeaj@law.gerorgetown.edu; jmstarr@cipbonline.org
Subject: Re WQED Petition

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners Abernathy, Copps, Martin and Salas,

I am submitting these comments in connection with WQED Pittsburgh's petition (I do not have the FCC docket number) for FCC approval of its plan to dereserve and sell station WQEX Channel 16 to ShootingStar, Inc.

WQEX was once a valuable educational and cultural contributor to the southwestern Pennsylvania region. It offered programming unavailable on other channels, including its sister station WQED. I have never understood why this profitable community asset has not continued to offer the programs I came to enjoy and expect while the future of the station is being decided.

More important, I want to see WQEX return to the air with the kind of programming that this channel was intended to provide. Therefore, I am opposed to WQED selling WQEX to any entity that will not continue the non commercial, educational and alternative programming so needed by our community.

Public television was instituted to be "a forum for controversy and debate" and "a voice in the community that may otherwise be unheard". More than any channel in our area, including WQED, WQEX provided that platform. Accordingly, I expect the FCC to protect the public interest and insure that WQEX Channel 16 returns to the airwaves as a non commercial public television station.

Yours truly,

David Hughes
Executive Director
Citizen Power
2121 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15217
(412)421-6072
www.citizenpowerinc.org

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From: Paul D Jacobs <pdj+@andrew.cmu.edu> [Save Address](#) - [Block Sender](#)

To: mpowell@fcc.gov [Save Address](#)

CC: sness@fcc.gov, gtristan@fcc.gov, campbeaj@wpgate.law3.georgetown.edu, slerman@lsl-law.com, conematt@hotmail.com [Save Address](#)

Date: Thu, 22 Feb 2001 12:49:36 -0500 (EST)

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Mr. Powell,

As a Pittsburgher and supporter of public television, I am concerned that WQEQ proposes to sell one of our public TV stations (WQEX). WQEX is an invaluable public resource, and WQED's proposal to commercialize it would do irreparable harm.

The plan reflects WQED's ongoing irresponsibility as a trustee for public broadcasting in the Pittsburgh area. Fiscal mismanagement has led them into their current situation, which they now attempt to recover from by their unacceptable plan to liquidate a public asset. This decision was made by its board members, behind closed doors, despite local community complaints and requests for a more public, open discussion of alternatives.

As someone who appreciates quality public programming, to the limited extent it's available on current airwaves, I feel strongly that the last thing we need in Pittsburgh is another commercial channel. Please reject WQED's petition to transfer the station into commercial hands, and urge them to fulfill their responsibilities as caretakers of a publicly owned resource.

Sincerely,

Paul D. Jacobs
Friend of Public Broadcasting

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Jerold M. Starr

From: Kathy Johnston [kathyjoh+@pitt.edu]
Sent: Thursday, November 29, 2001 8:28 PM
To: webmaster@save16.org; mpowell@fcc.gov; kabernat@fcc.gov; mcopps@fcc.gov;
kjmweb@fcc.gov; msalas@fcc.gov; slerman@lsl-law.com; campbeaj@law.georgetown.edu;
jmstarr@cipbonline.org
Subject: WQED application to commercialize and sell the WQEX educational license

Dear Commission members,

Please do not approve the commercialization and sale of WQEX's educational license. I support keeping Channel 16 a public broadcasting station. I enjoyed the programs on that station before they were shut down. Public TV is such a wonderful thing to have. It is a shame that for the past few years this channel has been wasted. Please revive WQEX!

Kathy Johnston-Keane
1551 Old Beulah Road
Pittsburgh, Pa 15235

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Jerold M. Starr

From: jordan+@pitt.edu on behalf of Pamela Jordan [pjordan+@pitt.edu]
Sent: Friday, November 09, 2001 5:18 PM
To: mpowell@fcc.gov; kabernat@fcc.gov; mcopps@fcc.gov; kjmweb@fcc.gov; msalas@fcc.gov; slerman@isl-law.com; campbeaj@law.georgetown.edu; jmstarr@cipbonline.org
Subject: Comment on WQED's petition regarding WQEX

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Dear FCC Commissioners,

As a resident of Pittsburgh and a supporter of WQED, I oppose their petition to commercialize and sell sister station WQEX to ShootingStar, Inc. WQEX is a public trust awarded to the people of Pittsburgh for educational broadcasting. It is not private property to be sold for profit by WQED Pittsburgh.

Pittsburgh is a large and active city. We can easily support two public broadcasting stations just as other smaller cities do. In fact, right now Pittsburgh Educational Television (PET), a community initiative, has a business plan to restore public broadcasting on Channel 16. Please give PET a chance to serve the people of our community.

Pam Jordan
804 E. Hutchinson Ave.
Pittsburgh PA 15218

Jerold M. Starr

From: chris keane [crkcity+@pitt.edu]
Sent: Friday, November 30, 2001 10:37 AM
To: webmaster@save16.org; mpowell@fcc.gov; kabernat@fcc.gov; mcopps@fcc.gov; kjmweb@fcc.gov; msalas@fcc.gov; slerman@lsl-law.com; campbeaj@law.georgetown.edu; jmstarr@cipbonline.org
Subject: The potential loss of a Public Channel (16 - WQEX) - a serious threat to excellence in the content of broadcast

To Commission members,

Like many faculty members here at the University of Pittsburgh, I have been keenly aware of the plans to sell channel 16. I am one of a great many in my academic community who strongly oppose the sale of WQEX's educational license--commonly referred to as the commercialization of channel 16.

Please retain channel 16 as a PUBLIC station. As you know a book has recently been written on this topic. Many of us have read it and agree with it.

Personally, I have watched channel 16 for many years. If it were not for the channel, I would not have been able to catch many important programs which, at the time (many years ago), included Firing Line with Bill Buckley, Bill Moyers. These and similar programs were among the best programs available on television because a great range of intellectuals (Noam Chomsky, Alan Ginsberg, were given time to expound their well-informed and diverse perspectives.

There are too many programs of artistic excellence that have not adequate chance to be audienced with only one public channel. These include BBC productions such as the complete works of Shakespeare, symphony performances, interviews with Joseph Campbell and countless others.

The sale of channel 16-WQEX is a serious blow to intellectual debate, to the broadcast of diverse perspectives and to excellence in entertainment. This would also be a blow to education, particularly to children.

I only feel guilty that I have not written earlier.

Sincerely,

Chris Keane
211 Parran Hall
130 DeSoto Street
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

ps. Here's a quote to keep in mind:

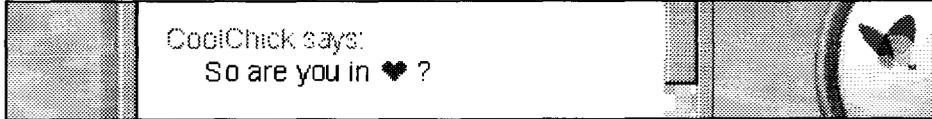
". . . non-commercial educational broadcast stations will be licensed only . . . upon a showing that the proposed stations will be used primarily to serve the educational needs of the community."

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To: ["conematt@hotmail.com"](mailto:conematt@hotmail.com) <conematt@hotmail.com> [Save Address](#)

Subject: CIPB

Date: Fri, 16 Feb 2001 13:57:30 -0500

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Dr. Bridget

Kilroy
335 S. Lang Ave.

Pittsburgh,

PA 15208

kilroybl@laroche.edu

February 16,

2001

Federal Communication Commission

Dear Madames and Sirs,

I am writing to voice my opinion on the sale of Public Television Station WQEX in Pittsburgh. I am strongly opposed to the sale for the following reasons:

When I moved to Pittsburgh in 1992, I was very impressed by the quality of Public Broadcasting offered by the combination of WQED and WQEX. I gladly contributed to the station. Unfortunately, shortly after my arrival I learned of allegations of mismanagement of both people and funds at the joint station. These now well documented allegations included inflated salaries, asking staff to run executives' errands and walk their dogs rather than producing quality television, and failing to actually inform contributing members about internal policy decisions. The accused executives are still in office, and as far as I can tell their modus operendi have not changed. WQED has recently negotiated a deal with Shooting Star, and board chairman Tom McGough admitted that "the deal may not have been accomplished if we had tried to negotiate this deal in public."

WQED barely serves the local interest now. In a world that is changing rapidly, we are subject to simulcasting of endless repeats of Lawrence Welk, Antiques Roadshow, and programs about things that used to be here, including ice-cream and doo-wop music. Because the Shooting Star does not have the full asking price, they will be reliant on other people's money, and thus subject to other out-of-town people's commercial interests, not those of the diverse local population.

There is a local group, Pittsbrgh Educational Television, which is interested in taking over the station. I think new ideas and management would serve the community well, and I would gladly contribute again to a

station I felt I could trust and enjoy. I hope you will either reserve the station as a public station and make it available to new management, or require that WQED turn in it's wqex license, and make it available to someone who will use the frequency well. If WQED sells the station, which was formed with community money, I fear they will merely take that money and enjoy it well, but that the community will see little fresh, contemporary, locally relevant programming.

Sincerely,

Bridget

Kilroy

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Jerold M. Starr

From: Leonard S Kisslinger [kissling+@andrew.cmu.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, November 07, 2001 4:18 PM
To: mpowell@fcc.gov; kabernat@fcc.gov; mcopps@fcc.gov; kjmweb@fcc.gov; msalas@fcc.gov; slerman@sl-law.com; campbeaj@law.georgetown.edu; jmstarr@cipbonline.org
Cc: Leonard S Kisslinger
Subject: WQEX, Pittsburgh

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Dear members of the FCC and Colleagues,

I am sending this to urge you to keep WQEX as a public station devoted to public interests such as education and culture. Pittsburgh is no longer a steel town, but with its suburbs it is a large community with a large part of its economy based on educational, health, financial, informational, and cultural institutions and enterprises. It is a great metropolitan area, and a great place to raise a family with its educational and cultural advantages.

The Pittsburgh area needs WQEX to serve the public interest. Please do not let the managers of WQED sell it for profit.

Sincerely yours,
Leonard S. Kisslinger
Professor of Physics
Carnegie Mellon University

Jerold M. Starr

From: Jennifer A. Kukawa [jkukawa@andrew.cmu.edu]
Sent: Monday, November 26, 2001 1:36 PM
To: webmaster@save16.org; mpowell@fcc.gov; kabernat@fcc.gov; mcopps@fcc.gov; kjmweb@fcc.gov; msalas@fcc.gov; slerman@lsl-law.com; campbeaj@law.georgetown.edu; jmstarr@cipbonline.org
Subject: MM Docket No. 01-276

Subject: MM Docket No. 01-276 --- WQED application to commercialize and sell the WQEX educational license

From: Jennifer A Kukawa

To: webmaster@save16.org, mpowell@fcc.gov, kabernat@fcc.gov, mcopps@fcc.gov, kjmweb@fcc.gov, msalas@fcc.gov, slerman@lsl-law.com, campbeaj@law.georgetown.edu, jmstarr@cipbonline.org

Magalie Roman Salas
Office of the Secretary,
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commission members,

Please do not approve the commercialization and sale of WQEX's educational license!

I support keeping Channel 16 a public broadcasting station.

WQEX, Channel 16, is a public trust that was awarded to the people of Pittsburgh for educational broadcasting. It is not the private property of WQED Pittsburgh's board of directors and they should not be allowed to sell it for their profit.

WQEX 16 was a voice of cultural diversity in Pittsburgh. It was truly an alternative to the upper-middle-class outlet that WQED has been. 16 was a voice of Pittsburgh that we do not get to hear anymore--and it will be a shame if it is lost forever. By slashing the QEX 16, "QED Communications" is limiting its potential as a PUBLIC provider, but also will be limiting Pittsburgh's potential to educate and bring together our community.

QED Communications group wants to silence QEX 16's voice because it wants to serve their board of director's interest, but this is not the public's interest! When WQEX was broadcasting its own programming, it cost only \$1 million a year to operate. This was a fraction of WQED's budget, and the designated donations received for WQEX were more than its operating costs, representing a net revenue gain. A similar revenue surplus could easily fund any capital expenditures needed to put Channel 16 back on the air, whether through WQED or a new, independent organization.

WQED has admitted to the FCC it is not in danger of going dark. It claims a \$9 million debt, half of which it owes to its own capital fund. It also has other assets, like Pittsburgh Magazine, worth millions more. If WQED is allowed to get away with selling the Channel 16 educational license for another infomercial station, it will set terrible precedent. How many other public stations across the country will be put on the block to solve budget issues that lay elsewhere?

WQED continues to spend freely even while it pleads poverty. In recent

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years, CFOs Mel Ming and Neil Mahrer have enjoyed compensation packages of close to a quarter million dollars a year each. Ten other WQED executives receive compensation packages up to \$160,000 per year. This is far in excess of counterpart stations in Philadelphia and St. Louis, and, given that WQED has nonetheless been paying down its debt, it represents that WQED has no dire financial need to cash in on the Channel 16 license. WQED has rejected bids from non-profit institutions in the community to operate WQEX as a public station. Instead, WQED CEO George Miles has demanded a huge windfall that is far in excess of the real market value of a noncommercial, public broadcasting license. As an alternative, a community initiative, Pittsburgh Educational Television (PET), has developed a business plan to restore public broadcasting on Channel *16 and serve the community WQED misses. Please give PET a chance to serve the people of this region.

Sincerely,

Jennifer A. Kukawa

Jennifer A. Kukawa
Carnegie Mellon University-GSIA 316
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Phone: 412.268.5043
Fax: 412.268.7064
Email: jkukawa@andrew.cmu.edu

Jerold M. Starr

From: Lapp, Nancy [NLapp@pts.edu]
Sent: Monday, December 10, 2001 11:30 PM
To: 'mpowell@fcc.gov'; 'kabernat@fcc.gov'; 'mcopps@fcc.gov'; 'kjmweb@fcc.gov';
'msalas@fcc.gov'; 'slerman@isl-law.com'; 'campbeaj@law.georgetown.edu';
'jmstarr@cipbonline.org'
Subject: Save WQEX for Pittsburgh

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Dear Friends:

I am writing to ask that you prevent WQED from divesting WQEX and taking it away from the people of Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh public desperately needs the community programming WQEX can offer. If funds are managed correctly and fairly, Pittsburgh can easily support two public television stations.

WQED should not be allowed to profit from the sale of WQEX. WQEX belongs to the public. WQED has a history of mismanaging funds and continues to pay high salaries to its executives and should not be trusted with money and profit which belongs to the people of Pittsburgh.

Thanks you for your consideration, and we plead that WQED's request not be granted.

Nancy Lapp
18 Oxford Ct.
Pittsburgh, PA 15237



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From: "Shirly Lee" <shirlylee@earthlink.net> Save Address - Block Sender
To: <mpowell@fcc.gov> Save Address
"Matt Cone" <conematt@hotmail.com>, <sness@fcc.gov>,
CC: <CAMPBEAJ@wpgate.law3.georgetown.edu>, <slerman@isl-law.com>, <gtristan@fcc.gov>,
<hfurchtg@fcc.gov> Save Address
Subject: KEEP WQEX PUBLIC
Date: Sun, 25 Feb 2001 18:09:24 -0600

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2/25/01

Chairman Powell:

There are few times in life where we encounter choices that are so clear-cut as to hardly be deemed "choices." A few examples of this phenomenon that immediately spring to my mind are:

- Should I lay the ball up or throw the lob to Michael Jordan?
-Should I wear a "Free Mumia" t-shirt to a police convention?
-Should I bring sunscreen when I vacation in Arizona?

The choice of whether or not to dereserve WQEX is perhaps less challenging than those presented in any of these scenarios.

After all, why would a reasonable person choose to replace one of the two existing public television stations in the area with another commercial station? Anyone who switches between the commercial stations these days will notice that wit, depth, and originality are in startlingly short supply. On public television, however, the story is quite different. Public television regularly features series and specials that are innovative and complex. Even a mediocre public television station like WQED offers significantly more worthwhile programming than can be found on WPXI, WWCP, WTAE, KDKA, or any of the other commercial stations available in Pittsburgh.

Clearly, there is no imperative to introduce another commercial station to the Pittsburgh market. Doing so would not even occur or exist as a choice if not for the financial waste and mismanagement on the part of the management at WQED. Because of their bungling, you are now being asked to choose whether or not WQEX should be dereserved. This choice to deny this request is so straightforward that I hesitate to call it a choice.

Respectfully,

Shirly Lee

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Jerold M. Starr

From: lmw01 [lmw01@msn.com]

DEC 18 2001

Sent: Tuesday, December 04, 2001 8:08 PM

To: FCC-comments@save16.org; mpowell@fcc.gov; mcp@na.gov; mcopps@fcc.gov; kjmweb@fcc.gov; msalas@fcc.gov; slerman@isl-law.com; campbeaj@law.georgetown.edu; jmstarr@cipbonline.org

FCC MAIL ROOM

Subject: Subject: MM Docket No. 01-276 --- WQED application to commercialize and sell the WQEX educational license

Magalie Roman Salas
Office of the Secretary,
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commission members,

Please do not approve the commercialization and sale of WQEX's educational license. I support keeping Channel 16 a public broadcasting station.

Pittsburgh does not need another commercial TV channel -- it already has more than enough! Since WQED shut down WQEX's programming and began simulcasting, it has failed to meet the educational and community needs of this region. We need an alternative educational channel which can serve the people of the entire community -- as well as, or better than, WQEX once did.

Sincerely,
Anna Loney
1317 Beechview Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15216

Jerold M. Starr

From: Juan Leon [jl@carnegietech.org]
Sent: Sunday, December 09, 2001 4:24 PM
To: mpowell@fcc.gov; kabernat@fcc.gov; mcopps@fcc.gov; kjmweb@fcc.gov; msalas@fcc.gov; slerman@lsl-law.com; campbeaj@law.georgetown.edu; jmstarr@cipbonline.org
Subject: Reject subsidy to bad public station WQED

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FCC MAIL ROOM

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners,

As a past long-time viewer of WQEX (Channel 16), Pittsburgh, PA, I am writing to urge you to reject the petition of WQED Pittsburgh to commercialize and sell sister station WQEX to ShootingStar, Inc.

I urge you to do so because WQEX is a public trust awarded to the people of Pittsburgh for educational broadcasting, and I do not see why the people of Pittsburgh should be made to pay for WQED's mismanagement. WQED management is primarily responsible for the current debt miring the station, and should not be allowed to bail out of it by simply getting rid of part of the invaluable assets it had been originally appointed to manage (mind you, to manage, NOT to dispose of).

I urge you to do so because this community asset must be preserved for noncommercial educational broadcasting. Pittsburgh does not need yet another commercial station. Pittsburgh is still a thriving city and WQEX was a very popular alternative. When it was broadcasting its own programming, WQEX cost only \$1 million a year to operate. Not only was this a fraction of WQED's budget, but WQEX actually generated a revenue surplus.

There are many other reasons to reject the commercialization of WQEX, but I would like here to point your attention to the fact that WQED has rejected bids from not-for-profit institutions in the community to operate WQEX as a public station because they weren't willing to give CEO George Miles the huge windfall he has demanded, far in excess of the real market value of a noncommercial station. In fact, right now Pittsburgh Educational Television (PET), a community initiative, has a business plan to restore public broadcasting on Channel 16. Please give PET a chance to serve the people of this community.

As the chairman and members of a commission whose mission is the protection of the public interest, I trust you will make the right decision, and will reject WQED's request for the commercialization of WQEX, a deal that would clearly undermine the interests of the people of Pittsburgh.

Sincerely,

Juan Leon
911 South Negley Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pa 15232-2611

Jerold M. Starr

From: Rebecca Long [ilikebogie@hotmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, December 01, 2001 7:21 PM
To: webmaster@save16.org; mpowell@fcc.gov; kabernat@fcc.gov; mcopps@fcc.gov; kjmweb@fcc.gov; msalas@fcc.gov; slerman@lsl-law.com; campbeaj@law.georgetown.edu; jmstarr@cipbonline.org
Subject: MM Docket No. 01-276 --- WQED application to commercialize and sell the WQEX edu

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners,

Please do not approve the commercialization and sale of WQEX's educational license. I support keeping Channel 16 a public broadcasting station.

WQEX, Channel 16, is a public trust that was awarded to the people of Pittsburgh for educational broadcasting. It is not the private property of WQED Pittsburgh's board of directors and they should not be allowed to sell it for a profit.

Pittsburgh does not need another commercial TV channel -- it already has more than enough! Since WQED shut down WQEX's programming and began simulcasting, it has failed to meet the larger educational and community needs of this region. We need an alternative educational channel which can serve the people of the entire community -- as well, or better, than WQEX once did.

WQED programs consist largely of children's shows and the national feed with some cooking and period music shows mixed in. Its present programming schedule primarily targets an affluent audience and misses a large segment of the regional population. Channel *16 (WQEX), with its broader emphasis on community oriented programming and alternative points of view, filled that void and was once the third most watched "second station" in the country. We need it now more than ever.

Pittsburgh is a large and active city. We support three professional sports teams, a world class symphony, an opera company, a ballet company, numerous outstanding art museums, world class natural history and science museums, and myriad other theatrical and cultural organizations. A number of our many universities, colleges, technical, art, culinary, and film schools are world class. We readily support three public radio stations. We can easily support two public TV stations -- other smaller cities presently do!

When WQEX was broadcasting its own programming, it cost only \$1 million a year to operate. This was a fraction of WQED's budget, and the designated donations received for WQEX were more than its operating costs, representing a net revenue gain. A similar revenue surplus could easily fund any capital expenditures needed to put Channel 16 back on the air, whether through WQED or a new, independent organization.

WQED's debts are the result of wasteful mismanagement. A WQED investigation into alleged embezzlement was kept secret even from its own board of directors. The people of the region should not suffer from the misdeeds of a few by losing an essential community asset..

WQED has admitted to the FCC it is not in danger of going dark. It claims a \$9 million debt, half of which it owes to its own capital fund. It also has other assets, like Pittsburgh Magazine, worth millions more. If WQED is allowed to get away with selling the Channel 16 educational license for another infomercial station, it will set terrible precedent. How many other public stations across the country will be put on the block to solve budget issues that lay elsewhere?

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WQED's management has a long history of detachment from citizen input and its self-selected advisory board does not constitute community oversight. If that management should receive an undeserved windfall by selling our public asset, it would not and could not be held accountable to the public.

WQED continues to spend freely even while it pleads poverty. In recent years, CFOs Mel Ming and Neil Mahrer have enjoyed compensation packages of close to a quarter million dollars a year each. Ten other WQED executives receive compensation packages up to \$160,000 per year. This is far in excess of counterpart stations in Philadelphia and St. Louis, and, given that WQED has nonetheless been paying down its debt, it represents that WQED has no dire financial need to cash in on the Channel 16 license.

WQED has rejected bids from non-profit institutions in the community to operate WQEX as a public station. Instead, WQED CEO George Miles has demanded a huge windfall that is far in excess of the real market value of a noncommercial, public broadcasting license. As an alternative, a community initiative, Pittsburgh Educational Television (PET), has developed a business plan to restore public broadcasting on Channel *16 and serve the community WQED misses. Please give PET a chance to serve the people of this region.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Long
17 Wellsford Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
(412)683-8423

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DEC 18 2001

Jerold M. Starr

From: Nathan MacBrien [macbrien+@pitt.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, November 28, 2001 12:31 PM
To: webmaster@save16.org; mpowell@fcc.gov; kabernat@fcc.gov; mcopps@fcc.gov; kjmweb@fcc.gov; msalas@fcc.gov; slerman@lsl-law.com; campbeaj@law.georgetown.edu; jmstarr@cipbonline.org
Subject: MM Docket 01-276: WQED appl. to commercialize, sell WQEX educational license

FCC MAIL ROOM

Magalie Roman Salas
Office of the Secretary,
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commission members,

I am writing to urge you to deny the commercialization and sale of WQEX's educational license. I support Channel 16's continued existence as a public broadcasting station.

WQEX, Channel 16, is a public trust that was awarded to the people of Pittsburgh for educational broadcasting. It is not the private property of WQED Pittsburgh's board of directors, and they should not be allowed to sell it for a profit, WQED's financial difficulties notwithstanding.

As a former resident of Philadelphia, home of WYBE Channel 35, I know the impact that an independent public television station can have on a community. A community initiative here in Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Educational Television (PET), has developed a business plan to restore public broadcasting on Channel 16 and serve the communities not served by WQED or commercial television. Please give PET a chance to serve the people of this region.

Sincerely yours,

Nathan MacBrien
Acquisitions Editor, University of Pittsburgh Press

Home address and telephone:

5902 Beacon Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

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Hotmail DEC 18 2001



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Suzanne and friends

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conematt@hotmail.com

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From: **suzanne McDermott** <suzannemcd@yahoo.com> [Save Address](#) - [Block Sender](#)
To: [mpowell@fcc.gov](#) [Save Address](#)
CC: [sness@fcc.gov](#), [hfurchtg@fcc.gov](#), [gtristan@fcc.gov](#), [slerman@isl-law.com](#),
[CAMPBEAJ@wpgate.law3.georgetown.edu](#) [Save Address](#)
Subject: **We need WQEX**
Date: **Fri, 23 Feb 2001 09:32:54 -0800 (PST)**

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February 23

The Honorable Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Room 8-B201
Washington DC 20554

Chairman Powell,

Americans are inundated with sensationalistic television programs that titillate us, pander to us, and do nothing to address our desire for meaningful content. Lest you think that I am overstating the case, you would be well served to tune in to "Temptation Island," "Survivor," "The Mole," "Big Brother," "Baywatch," "The Man Show," "Springer," "Jackass," "Fear," "Popstars," "Jerry Springer," "The Real World," "Celebrity Profile," or any of a host of other equally vapid shows.

In the current media environment, the need for alternative programming that is smart and humane is strong. One of the only homes for such programming is public television. Unless we are willing to sit idly and watch as television gets dumber and dumber, we should ensure that public television receives the support it needs in order to persevere. It is with this thought in mind that I ask you to deny the proposal to allow WQEX to be turned in to a commercial station. WQEX, like any public television station, needs our help. Instead of destroying WQEX by selling it to a commercial broadcaster, we should strengthen it so that it will be able to continue to offer us programs that are smart and humane. If we care about preserving some space on the airwaves that we will feel proud to watch, this is the least that we can do.

Suzanne