

2/12/06

To: Federal Communications Commission

From: Gloria E. Garvin, PhD
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Re: 05-311

I am a producer with Pasadena Community Network and through this local public access station I, along with a team of volunteers, produce a weekly TV Newsmagazine entitled Pasadena MoveON Looks at the Issues. We "bicycle" our 28:30 minute shows out to other public access stations across the United States, reaching a potential audience of several million people. We work on a shoestring budget and yet are able to produce and distribute high quality shows thanks to the public access television system. One of our latest shows is titled "Saving Public Access" and I would be happy to submit the DVD for your consideration along with these comments.

My comments are in regard to the FCC's "Notice of Proposed Rulemaking" 05-311 on "video franchising." My personal experience as a producer is that public access has given my group the opportunity to create a high-quality TV show without requiring a huge budget. I along with other producers could not do what we are doing without local franchising which supports local public access stations. We are the life-blood of the community; local franchising is extremely important to all local cities and communities across the U.S. Local franchises allow for citizens such as myself to have some input into the media mix. Support for public access stations ensures that our media is not completely controlled by large corporations and that there remains a small vestige of free speech television. It's vitally important for local citizens and citizen groups to have some control over at least this aspect of telecommunications and media in our community. No local producers that I'm aware of have big budgets to work with, but what we lack in funds, we make up for in a passionate commitment to get our message out. We could not do this without local franchises supporting public access stations. Telecommunications companies must be accountable to the needs of consumers and we are the consumers as well as the producers. Telecommunications companies must give back to the community for the use of public airwaves. Without local franchises, communities will be stripped of PEG TV, but also will be left without an adequate way to ensure telecommunication companies charge reasonable rates, respond to customer complaints, and provide universal service.

Local franchises are the cornerstone of PEG TV and it is PEG that provides localism in our media. The production and distribution of shows like ours reflect the diversity of life and opinion in the USA.

PEG gives people like us an opportunity to express our points of view and our opinions on important issues. It also provides a place where the public can stay informed about local government affairs, and where educational shows can be aired in classrooms. Democracy works best when a wide range of ideas is made available to all people. PEG TV plays an important role in this and PEG cannot survive without the support of local franchises. Thus, we need to preserve PEG TV.

As a producer and supporter of Public Access TV in Pasadena, CA, I strongly urge the FCC to rule for the maintenance of local franchises.

Sincerely,

Gloria E. Garvin
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