

Re: CSR-8126, ACM et al, MB Docket No. 09-13

Dear Sir/Madam:

Melissa Nieves, Director of Adult Education at Union Settlement Association, urges the FCC to grant this Petition to protect public, education and government (PEG) Access, the local, noncommercial channels that are expressly devoted to serving the public. In Manhattan, Union Settlement uses YOUR ACCESS CENTER as an important means to reach viewers in need of our services. This petition details ways in which a national cable provider, AT&T's U-Verse system, places PEG channels at a disadvantage with inferior technology in comparison to other channels on its system. This discrimination against local, non-profit media providers hurts local democracy and the First Amendment. It's also contrary to what Congress intended in passing the 1984 Cable Act. For too many grassroots organizations, this will mean losing the connection with local viewers that enables groups to extend services to the community via television.

Community programming needs to be easily accessible to viewers, not placed in an inferior format that viewers will have difficulty finding and using. Fair policies and regulations must prevent discriminatory practices like this, particularly given the vast resources and capabilities of large companies like AT&T.

We urge you to act in the public interest by decisively granting this petition.

Sincerely,

Melissa Nieves

Director of Adult Education, Union Settlement Association