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Office of the Mayor  
City of Springfield, Illinois  
Timothy J. Davlin  
Mayor

March 2, 2009

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Petitions for Declaratory Ruling Regarding Public, Educational and Governmental Access Channels, MB Docket No. 09-13, CSR-8126 (ACM *et al.*), CRS-8127 (City of Lansing, MI), and CSR-8128 (City of Dearborn, MI *et al.*)

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The City of Springfield, Illinois urges the Commission to grant the three above-mentioned petitions concerning public, educational and governmental ("PEG") Access channels. We are concerned about the preservation of PEG Access as a needed community resource. In these comments we specifically address the role of PEG channels in our community, and the importance of preventing companies from inhibiting access to these channels.

The City of Springfield, Illinois offers live and repeat broadcasts of municipal government bodies that meet to deliberate key local issues on local PEG channels to residents of Springfield. That programming is of unique local interest and needs to be readily accessible to viewers, not placed in a format, which is inferior or less accessible than other channels.

Our understanding of AT&T's PEG product confirms many of the deficiencies identified in ACM *et al.*, CSR-2186. As detailed in that Petition, AT&T's PEG product is inferior to broadcast channels carried on AT&T's U-verse system in virtually every way that matters to a viewer. If channels are made less accessible, and are deprived of basic functions viewers have come to expect, many subscribers we now reach will not receive valuable information. It's unacceptable with the technological advances of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century that local residents would be deprived of easy access to information about the education of our children, dissemination of health information, facilitation of job placement, and emergency alerts.

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The FCC's policy goals of fostering localism and diversity in media are realized at the local level through PEG channels, particularly in light of the decreasing amount of local programming available on broadcast and other commercial channels. We look to the FCC to rule decisively in this matter to prevent inferior and discriminatory treatment of PEG channels to the detriment of the community at large.

Springfield PEG channels continuously provide a multitude of community oriented programs, especially their local governmental units like school board meetings and council meetings. Interspersed are reports about numerous cultural and civic events of importance. Additionally, the City itself provides real time, closed-captioned City Council and Council Committee meetings for individuals with hearing impairments.

PEG channels are a critical and irreplaceable resource for our community. If the Commission fails to prevent the industry practices at issue in these petitions, we have little doubt that other operators might also adopt approaches that marginalize or effectively eliminate PEG access. We therefore strongly urge the Commission to grant all three petitions.

Sincerely,



Timothy J. Davlin  
Mayor

cc: James N. Horwood  
Spiegel & McDiarmid LLP  
1333 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.  
Suite 200  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Teresa S. Decker  
Varnum  
P.O. Box 352  
Grand Rapids, MI 49501-0352

cc: Teresa S. Decker  
Varnum  
P.O. Box 352  
Grand Rapids, MI 49501-0352

Joseph Van Eaton  
Miller & Van Eaton P.L.L.C.  
1155 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.  
Suite 1000  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Senator Dick Durbin  
230 S Dearborn St.  
Suite 3892  
Chicago, IL 60604

Senator Roland Burris  
Kluczynski Federal Building  
230 S. Dearborn  
Chicago, IL 60604

Representative Phil Hare  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2001 52nd Avenue  
Moline, IL 61265

Representative John Shimkus  
U.S. House of Representatives  
513 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Aaron Schock  
U.S. House of Representatives  
100 NE Monroe, #100  
Peoria, IL 61602-1003