



July 15, 2014

The Honorable John D. Rockefeller IV
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science
and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Thune
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science
and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mark L. Pryor
Chairman
Subcommittee on Communications,
Technology, and the Internet
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Communications,
Technology, and the Internet
United States Senate
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Chairmen Rockefeller and Pryor and Ranking Members Thune and Wicker:

We write on behalf of TVfreedom.org's 28-member coalition to express our support for passage of S. 1789, the Community Access Preservation Act (CAP Act). We view this legislation as an important step forward in preserving diversity in local television programming in communities across America.

The CAP Act, sponsored by Senator Edward Markey (MA) and Senator Tammy Baldwin (WI), would preserve public, educational, and government (PEG) community access channels on Cable TV's lifeline basic service tier, allow PEG funding to be used to pay for the cost of equipment and daily operations, and ensure cable companies transmit PEG channels without charge to local governments.

In these challenging economic times in which the budgets of local governments are shrinking and municipalities are being asked to do more with less, it is critical that lawmakers factor this into their legislative agendas as they seek to empower local governments to deliver public service television programming to their communities.

Consumers value access to local government public service channels, as well as programming delivered by educational institutions and community-based, nonprofit organizations, such as religious groups. This type of programming encourages civic engagement by bringing local issues and people together via television. For this reason, we believe that localism in cable TV programming should be preserved.

As part of its core mission, TVfreedom.org will continue to fight for the millions of Americans who subscribe to the lifeline basic service tier on cable TV systems, the overwhelming majority who may not be able to afford higher-priced cable programming packages, nor have options for affordable alternatives for service in smaller TV markets.

We ask that Congress preserve the current structure of the lifeline basic service tier, which today includes access to PEG channels and the full complement of local broadcast TV stations.

In closing, we hope that you will give your support to passage of the CAP Act to help protect the long-term sustainability of PEG access channels in communities across America for the benefit of consumers and local governments.

Sincerely,

Robert C. Kenny
Director of Public Affairs
TVfreedom.org

cc: U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science
and Transportation members