



Re: CT House Bill #5509

To the Chairman and members of the committee,

I am writing this letter in opposition to House Bill #5509. I will attempt to briefly explain my reasons for my opposition.

I will first state that I was, and I still am, in favor of the expansion of video service providers to include new technologies in the state of CT. I believe that the addition of this new technology and the added competition as well as choice is a positive for the people of CT. I was very pleased when the legislature wrote into the legislation concerning Video Service providers, that PEG programming needed to be an integral part of the process. It seems that over the past few years Public Access has been taking some hits across the country. I was glad to see that the CT General Assembly values this important service.

Now, more specifically to the proposed bill. I believe that the issue raised in the bill is that the manner in which the PEG channels are accessed on the new IPTV system, is different than that of traditional cable. Well yes it is different, but in my opinion that difference is not necessarily a negative. First is the fact that for the first time since PEG programming was created in the early days of CATV we now have PEG service being transmitted on an alternate medium to traditional coaxial cable service. This to me is a huge success for the supporters of PEG programming.

Second, and more specifically to the manner in which AT&T is offering PEG programming. AT&T allows subscribers to U-Verse the ability to access any PEG programming that is currently being carried by AT&T in the state. Now relatives, business owners or any concerned citizen who has an interest in one of their surrounding communities will have the ability to view pertinent meetings or programs relative to their concerns.



I also believe that the manner in which we will access video content in our homes is changing rapidly. This is similar to what happened when CATV first entered the market. People were skeptical then and there were issues with the new service. As the issues were resolved and the technology evolved it became the standard for receiving video to our homes.

There have been other technologies, such as satellite networks, that have come along but the subscribers to these services are not able to view their local PEG programming. Now we have a new technology that allows for the transmission of PEG to its subscribers. Where it may not be identical in its format the fact that it is available to a whole new audience is exciting. In an age where subscribers have hundreds of channels to choose from the chances of "flipping" by a program are going away. The world is changing and we must embrace the new technologies or we will be left behind. I for one do not want to see PEG left behind. I believe that the current format for PEG is acceptable and even in the short time that AT&T has been offering the service they have made positive improvements in the way they carry the PEG service.

While there is always room for improvement in any system I believe that the current regulations as written in 16-333 are sufficient and do not need updating. I also believe that the format for PEG programming on AT&T is a positive thing as it allows for PEG content to be seen by a much larger audience and gives consumers more options in their TV viewing experience.

Respectfully,

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President

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