

To: Energy & Technology Committee Members
From: Jennifer Evans, West Hartford Community Television

**Written Testimony Supporting
Raised Bill S.B. No. 657**

**An Act Concerning Consumer Protection
of Cable Television and Video Service Customers**

On behalf of West Hartford Community Television, I thank you for the opportunity to participate in this legislative proceeding. We are encouraged by the committee's willingness to tackle some of the issues facing community television and its continued commitment to ensure that the people of Connecticut have meaningful access to the electronic media and that the responsibility to encourage local voices and programming is taken seriously. Toward that end, we fully support all aspects of this bill and respectfully request some technical amendments.

Line 3 ... To renew its "certificate" every five years.

Public Act 07-253 provided the opportunity for all video providers to receive a certificate to operate with no term limits or performance review. This new mechanism replaced the statewide franchising process and eliminated consumer protections to promote the public policy goal of competition. Currently, all video providers in the Hartford area are competitive video service providers so we ask that the language be clarified to ensure that all video providers, no matter what certificate is held, are required to renew after five years, thereby leaving no question about the legislative intent or role of the Authority to conduct the renewal process.

We ask that the delivery of community access television be one of the criteria that can be addressed during this renewal period in cooperation with the Office of Consumer Counsel. For the past three years, we have supported legislation to mandate the periodic review of providers. Currently, The Authority has a review process of community access providers yet the video providers do not have the same oversight. This bill will provide a mechanism, a brief window of time, once every five years, for issues to be addressed and remedies discussed. This mechanism provides for measurement and compliance of the quality of services provided to people of Connecticut.

Technological, economic and behavioral changes are dramatically altering how we communicate. Communications innovations and consolidation have left community media as one of last local, independent and non-commercial media. Our core values of localism, diversity, community conversation, civic engagement and education through media are as important now as they have ever been.