



Newington Community Television, Inc.

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Prime Time Newington

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Good Afternoon,

My name is Jim Failla and I am the Satellite & Internet Video Engineer at Newington Community Television (NCTV). While I hold that title, I use it loosely – our studio is entirely volunteer staffed, so we all are tasked with whatever work is necessary to get Newington's home-grown content created and distributed to its residents and ex-pats.

I am here today to express NCTV's support for the PEGPETIA program, as well as the bills currently under review by the E&T Committee that would rescind the sweep of PEGPETIA funds.

I cannot stress to the Committee how critical PEGPETIA funds are to NCTV's existence.

Unlike most public access stations, NCTV is not a designated CAP, so we do not receive our full CAP allocation. Instead, Cox Cable does, and from that NCTV receives a \$15,000 a year stipend. When combined with donations from the Town of Newington and other sources, our yearly budget has been in the ballpark of \$30,000. At the same time, we are tasked with (and have successfully delivered) two channels of programming, operating 24 hours a day and 365 days a year. I can assure you that PEGPETIA has been a critical piece of our recipe for success.

PEGPETIA funding helps us dramatically increase our yearly budget, sometimes up to five-fold. It really enables us to stay current with technology and keep content fresh for all audiences. Without PEGPETIA we'd have to save for new equipment each year, which is extremely difficult for us given our current funding arrangement.

NCTV has applied for three PEGPETIA grants since the program has been launched – all of which have replaced critical equipment that has broken or gone obsolete over the years, but none has been as critical to NCTV's very existence as the one we submitted a few years ago when our original studio building was demolished to make room for new senior housing and we had to move into the basement of Town Hall.

On our operating budget, there would have been no way for us to be able to afford this move, and we would have had to most likely fold up shop if the Town was not willing to pick up the expenses beyond what our budget could support. However, because of PEGPETIA, we were able to successfully make our move, all while upgrading our studio's capabilities in the process. This has led to increased programming, increased viewer engagement, and the ability to use this investment as a springboard to launch other new services to our viewers.

Again, I cannot fully express how vital PEGPETIA funding is to us at NCTV in fulfilling our mission of providing relevant, hyper-local programming to the residents of Newington, and further providing those same residents with a voice on television. I urge the Committee to support these bills rescinding the sweep of PEGPETIA funds to the General Fund, and restore the full funding of the PEGPETIA program.

The existence of NCTV, and studios in Connecticut in the same non-CAP position, depend on

your support.

Thank you for your time.

Jim Failla

Satellite & Internet Video Engineer

NCTV