

Thursday, February 7th is the deadline to propose bills for the session.

REQUESTED ACTION: PEGPETIA funding should be restored rather than swept into the General Fund, by rescinding sections 100 and 101 of PA 13-184.

The CT Grant Program PEGPETIA, (Public, Educational, Governmental Programming and Education Technology Investment Account) has been jeopardized; your help is needed!

Public Act No. 13-184 "An Act Concerning Expenditures and Revenue for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2015", (Sec. 100-101 and Sec. 108) <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2013/ACT/PA/2013PA-00184-R00HB-06704-PA.htm> from the Governor's office swept all funds from this program for the next 2 fiscal years; there is a chance to recover the funds, NOW !

Administered by the CT's Public Utility Regulatory Authority, PEGPETIA under Section 33 of Public Act 07-253, An Act Concerning Certified Competitive Video Services, now codified as 16-331cc of the General Statutes of CT which created the account, is intended to, "promote and improve public, educational and governmental (PEG) access programming in CT with the goal to increase the quantity, quality and variety of community access productions." Additionally, 50% of PEGPETIA funds are to be made available to boards of education and other educational entities for technology initiatives.

PEGPETIA is funded by a gross earnings tax on cable TV service, to be used to benefit the public's community TV stations and schools. This is not the first time PEGPETIA has been at risk, but *this is the first time that the funds were robbed to fix other spending problems; we can get them back!*

- *PEGPETIA fund is currently closed for all applications. Since the state is operating at a surplus and opened a new \$10 million technology account for schools last July, it seems that part of this money was derived from a tax on video providers (not state money).*
- *It is our understanding that 100% of the contributions to the fund are currently being taken on a quarterly basis and that PURA does not expect be offering grants again until fall of 2015 unless we act now.*
- *From a historical perspective, these sweeps were removed from the House bill last session but then slid back in when the Senate approved the budget. Many legislators were not aware of this line item and its direct effect on the future of their local access centers' ability to stay relevant to their community and on our schools and libraries to keep pace with rapidly changing technology.*

Nonprofit organizations, paid for by the public, are asked to perform and teach on old, antiquated equipment and coupled with the loss in cable subscribers (Nutmeg TV's funding levels have dropped over \$40,000 annually); we are left with no recourse to somehow stay current with changing technology.

Several legislators--Lonnie Reed & Rob Sampson--are working with the finance committee to restore the fund. Now is the time you determine what to do with "the surplus..."

For a further overview of the PEGPETIA program, click on the following link:
http://www.ct.gov/pura/cwp/view.asp?a=3359&Q=490944&puraNav_GID=1702

This is our only source of capital funding beyond what we each can raise in our community.

Please contact me at 860-321-7405 with questions.

Sincerely,

Joanie Sutter
Executive Director

From: Joanie Sutter

Sent: Monday, January 27, 2014 4:12 PM

To: Catherine.Abercrombie@cga.ct.gov; whit.betts@housegop.ct.gov; Tim.LeGeyt@housegop.ct.gov; Frank.Nicastro@cga.ct.gov; Peter.Tercyak@cga.ct.gov; Brian.Becker@cga.ct.gov; John.Piscopo@housegop.ct.gov; Senator Beth Bye; Senator Terry Gerratana (sent via website form)

Subject: Restore \$6.9 Million Transferred to General Fund - Deadline for Proposed Bill Feb 7th

Importance: High



January 27, 2014

**Re: Put Back \$6.9 Million, Taken and Transferred to the General Fund from PEGPETIA
Proposed Bill Deadline is February 7th, 2014**

The CT Grant Program PEGPETIA, (Public, Educational, Governmental Programming and Education Technology Investment Account) has been jeopardized; your help is needed!

Public Act No. 13-184 "An Act Concerning Expenditures and Revenue for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2015", (Sec. 100-101 and Sec. 108) <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2013/ACT/PA/2013PA-00184-ROOHB-06704-PA.htm> from the Governor's office swept all funds from this program for the next 2 fiscal years; there is a chance to recover the funds, now!

Administered by the CT's Public Utility Regulatory Authority, PEGPETIA under Section 33 of Public Act 07-253, An Act Concerning Certified Competitive Video Services, now codified as 16-331cc of the General Statutes of CT which created the account, is intended to, "promote and improve public, educational and governmental (PEG) access programming in CT with the goal to increase the quantity, quality and variety of community access productions." Additionally, 50% of PEGPETIA funds are to be made available to boards of education and other educational entities for technology initiatives.

PEGPETIA is funded by a gross earnings tax on cable TV service, to be used to benefit the public's community TV stations and schools. This is not the first time PEGPETIA has been at risk, but *this is the first time that the funds were robbed to fix other spending problems; we can get them back!*

REQUESTED ACTION:

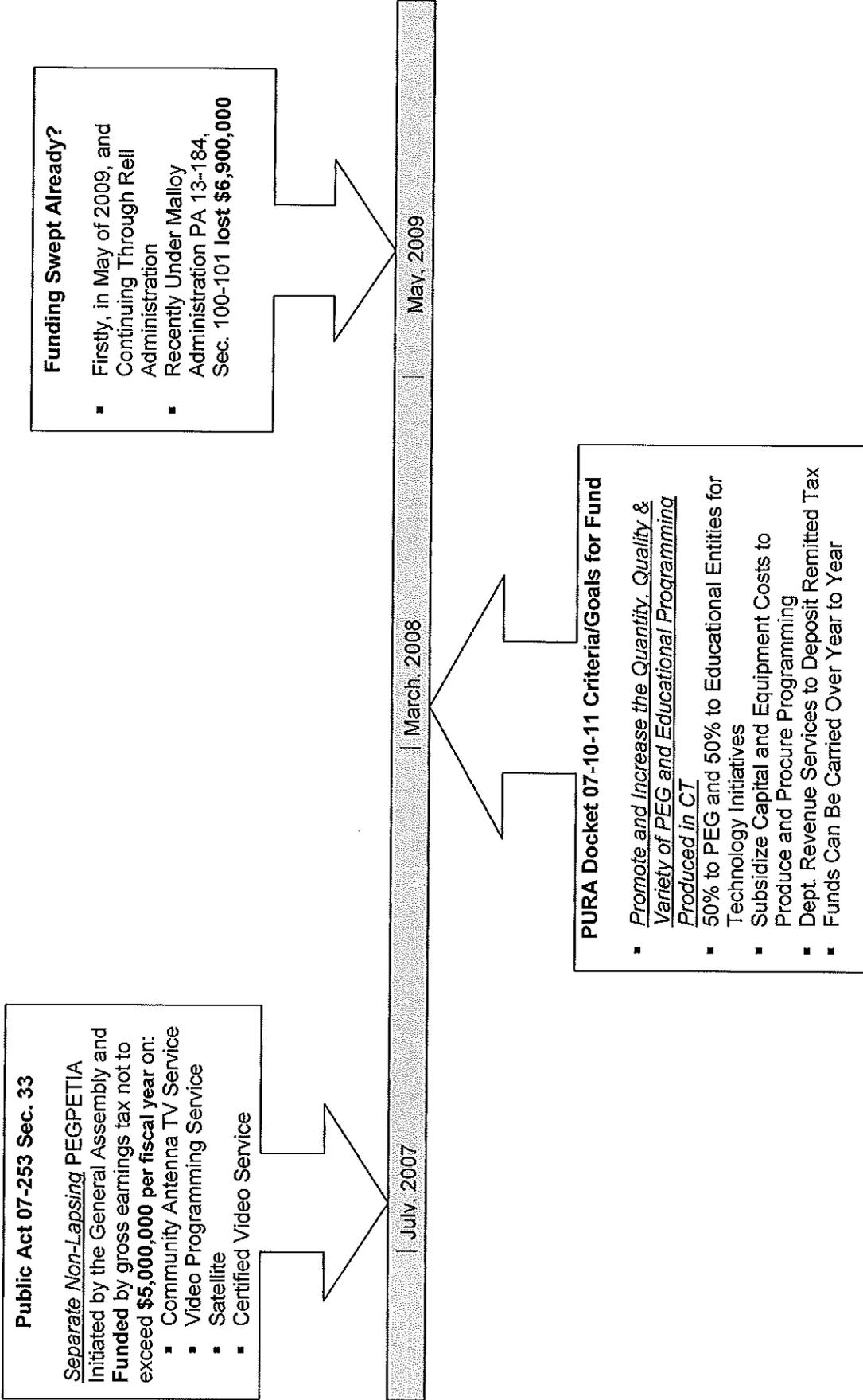
- Put Back the \$6.9 Million Taken in June, 2013!
- This transfer of funds has hurt our community TV stations and schools.

Nonprofit organizations, paid for by the public, are asked to perform and teach on old, antiquated equipment and coupled with the loss in cable subscribers (Nutmeg TV's funding levels have dropped over \$40,000 annually), we are left with no recourse to somehow stay current with changing technology.

For a further overview of the PEGPETIA program, click on the following link:
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PEGPETIA Timeline



What's The Problem? What's the Solution?

The Language Isn't Clear for Voting Legislators!

You would have to look up the exact program being cut, for example, Section 24 of SB 843 (PA 13-184) actually read, "(Effective from passage) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 16-331cc of the general statutes, the sum of \$3,400,000 shall be transferred from the public, educational and governmental programming and education technology investment account and credited to the resources of the General Fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014."

What does this mean? \$3.4 million in a separate, non-lapsing, targeted fund was moved into the General Fund.

"If you didn't know what the account was actually used for, you might not fully appreciate what you were voting to cut." AND since the bill doesn't identify how much money is actually available in the account, you wouldn't know that, **ALL THE FUNDS WERE CUT!**



Work Together!

We appreciate our Legislators and we understand that it takes all of us to watch and protect the vital resources put into place for the Public.

- the State is operating at a surplus

What does this mean?

Please reinstate the funds and vote to protect it from further sliding into the General Fund.

