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Senate Bill--286
**AN ACT CONCERNING THE PUBLIC EDUCATION AND
GOVERNMENTAL PROGRAMMING AND EDUCATIONAL
TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENT ACCOUNT (PEGPETIA) GRANT
PROGRAM AND MUNICIPALLY OPERATED EDUCATION AND
GOVERNMENT ACCESS CHANNELS**

Testimony of Paul R. Cianelli

I am Paul Cianelli, President and CEO of the New England Cable & Telecommunications Association, Inc. (“NECTA”).

NECTA is a regional trade association that represents substantially all cable operators in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

This is my written testimony stating NECTA’s respectful request that Senate Bill No. 286 be modified in Section 2 to make clear access programming will continue without interruption or additional cost on cable customers.

The cable telecommunications industry has had a long history of supporting PEG access programming in CT. All of our members currently provide it and regularly interact with local access providers across the state.

In 2008, the General Assembly established the Public, Education and Governmental Programming and Educational Technology Investment Account (PEGPETIA) grant program.

The program fund is intended to promote and improve public, educational and governmental access programming in Connecticut and to be made available to boards of education and other educational entities for educational technology initiatives.

If the Committee intends to modify the existing PEGPETIA program in the ways contemplated by SB 286, the cable industry would respectfully request that the bill also be modified to ensure the operational continuity of access programming and that no additional costs be passed on to cable customers.

Specifically, commensurate with the modifications being proposed in SB 286 the industry would seek clarifying language that any additional expense to access a headend for any access providers be borne by either the PEGPETIA grant program or by the access providers themselves.

February 29, 2016

Respectfully submitted,

Paul R. Cianelli
President